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# LYME LETTERS

1660—1760



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LYME, FROM THE DUTCH GARDEN

*From a Water-colour Sketch by the late Augustus Hare*

# LYME LETTERS

1660—1760

*E.C.B.—D.L.*  
BY THE LADY NEWTON

ILLUSTRATED



LONDON  
WILLIAM HEINEMANN, LTD.

1925

*First published 1925*

*Printed in Great Britain by Richard Clay & Sons, Ltd., Bungay, Suffolk*



## PREFATORY NOTE

IN the preparation of this book, which has entailed constant reference to unpublished material in private hands; I have received help, from friends and strangers alike, which it would be difficult for me to over-estimate. I cannot name all, but amongst those who have helped me, I can do no less than express my obligation to the following:—

To Mr. and Mrs. Bankes of Winstanley, who allowed me access to their family papers and gave me help in other ways;

To the Warden of All Souls, Oxford, for having courteously examined for me the records of his College;

To F. Madan, Esq., of Oxford, for his continued interest and advice;

To the Hon. Gerald Agar-Robartes, who allows me to reproduce the Kip engraving and the photograph of Wimpole;

To C. Onslow Master, Esq., of Bourton Hall, Bristol, who has most kindly allowed me to reproduce several of his interesting family portraits;

To Mrs. Baldwyn Childe for interesting information;

To Captain and Mrs. Fountaine of Narford for permission to reproduce their portrait of Sir Thomas Chicheley;

To Mrs. Tatton of Wythenshawe and to Frank Weld, Esq., for valuable kind help.

To Mr. F. J. Cox and Mr. G. E. Manwaring of the London Library for the assistance they have given me in making my references, to Mr. Manwaring in particular for his endless zeal and pains in providing me with the information I required;

To my dear friend, Sir Edmund Gosse, for his unfailing interest and help and encouragement.

*August, 1925.*



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## INTRODUCTION

THE very kind and most unexpectedly favourable reception accorded to my first book, "The House of Lyme," has encouraged me to hope that a sort of sequel to that work might be of some interest to an indulgent public. I have taken this from the period of the Restoration, and I propose to introduce to my readers the sons and daughters of my favourite character, Richard Legh of Lyme (1634-1687), and his wife Elizabeth. I have also incorporated with their lives and letters other material for which I had no space in my earlier work. This consists of selections from a large number of letters, some of considerable interest, relating to the family and other personages who have figured in the past history of the house, together with references to the most stirring events of the time. I have therefore found it necessary to go over some of the same ground again, in order to provide a suitable setting to my picture. Of necessity this setting is a different, and perhaps a less romantic one, as in my first book, I built up the House of Lyme—as it were—before my readers' eyes. I have, however, endeavoured to introduce fresh glimpses of the home life at Lyme, and so to open out a new vista of the old house, with the description and lives of its offshoots.

Thirteen children were born to Richard and Elizabeth Legh. Five of their six sons lived to grow up, but of these there are only three authentic portraits, that of Peter, the eldest, Calveley, the fourth, and Francis, the sixth and youngest surviving son. Two of their seven daughters died infants, and of the remaining five, there are only reliable portraits of the two eldest, Lettice and Betty.

Children are rarely supposed to inherit the same quality of

## INTRODUCTION

good looks or charm as their parents possessed, and these seventeenth-century Leghs are no exception to this rule, but their lives and letters have a certain interest and value, as throwing considerable light upon the manners, customs and domestic life of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

I trust that my readers will show the same kindness and indulgence to this my second literary effort which, greatly daring, but in some trepidation, I launch upon the world, buoyed up by

“White-handed Hope—that hovering angel, girt with  
golden wings.”

E. N.

## CHAPTER I

### RETROSPECT—WIMPOLE AND THE CHICHELEYS

BEFORE introducing my first character, Lettice, eldest daughter of Richard Legh (1634-1687) and his wife Elizabeth, to my readers, I must traverse some of the ground covered by "The House of Lyme" and recall the figures of her father and mother.

Their marriage had taken place on January 1, 1661, barely eight months after the restoration of Charles II. The bells were still ringing and the cheers and acclamations of the delighted people had hardly subsided. Life was joyous. The dark and gloomy days of the Puritans were past and gone. The King had come to his own again, and all went merry as a marriage bell. Led by their ruler, the people were out for pleasure and pleasure only. And who can blame them? They had not long been freed from the despotism of a dictator, whose rule had been one of the most harsh and tyrannous that England had ever known, and who, under the guise of a democracy, had established a form of government almost entirely military, in which the people had no voice at all. They had had enough of the prick-eared Roundheads, with their psalm-singing and canting hypocrisy, and of the dreary days when all innocent mirth was regarded as a crime, and everything in the nature of sport or harmless recreation was banned and forbidden.

Who can wonder that, with the return of their rightful sovereign, a great gentleman to his finger tips, gay, laughter-loving, irresponsible, but wholly lovable, the Nation should have abandoned itself to enjoyment only, with no thought for the morrow or of the serious business of life?

Amid the personages who figured at the Court of Charles II,



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Richard Legh stands out supreme in the steadfastness and integrity of his character and the unsullied purity of his life. Although from his intimate acquaintance with both Charles II and the Duke of York, and in his position as a Member of Parliament, he was brought much into contact with many of the not very creditable individuals who played so leading a part in the politics and society of the day, no breath of scandal ever touched his reputation nor tarnished the lustre of his honoured name. He moved among the brilliant and sparkling throng, *with* them but never *of* them—a conspicuous and shining example of the domestic virtues.

Of strikingly handsome appearance, and with great charm of manner, he was sought out and in much request in London society during his enforced absences from Lyme, where, for family reasons, he had often perforce to leave his wife. But his heart was ever with her in his beloved home, and although the attractions at Court were many and the temptations of the time were great, he remained unswerving in his allegiance to his Elizabeth, and the fair and frail ones set their nets and spread their lures in vain.

And yet he was neither priggish nor austere. The wit of the Restoration was coarse in the extreme, and the ordinary topics of conversation amongst the ladies and gentlemen in any gathering would startle even the most outspoken and least reticent of the present-day chroniclers. In whatever society, however, that he found himself, Richard always contributed his share to the gaiety and conversation. He could discuss the many vexed questions of the moment with the politicians, and give, as he was often asked to do, his opinion on any affair of State, while his keen sense of humour and ready wit enabled him to deliver a repartee or parry a thrust with any wag of the day.

From all the dissipations and allurements of the Court and society, Richard returned with joy and relief to the hills and moorland of his northern home. Its peace and beauty never seemed more soothing than on his arrival after a long and weary journey, when, riding up the lovely park, the glory of the setting

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sun in his eyes, the purity and freshness of the air seemed like a breath from an enchanted world.

And here I may mention that nowhere in any part of Europe or the East that I have visited—and I have travelled a good deal—have I seen anything to compare to the autumn sunsets at Lyme. Whether from the atmosphere, or from what other cause I know not, but the gorgeous colouring of the sunset sky, lit up with every variety of pink, red, crimson and orange, shading into deepest purple, make a picture few artists could do full justice to. I have seen, too, the clouds and colours assume fantastic shapes. In October or November 1913, I was standing one evening at my sitting-room window, which faces north-west, when I saw, stretching out right across the sky, the Union Jack laid out as plainly as on any flag. The St. Andrew's cross was composed of all the brightest colours, beginning with pale grey, turning to pink, orange, red, crimson, mauve and purple, shading almost to black. So impressed was I, that I ran down to my husband's room just below, to draw his attention to this curious spectacle, and together we watched it fade and die. I never saw any mention of it in the newspapers next day, although one would have thought it might have been worth somebody's while to chronicle so curious a phenomenon.

I have heard it said that flags seen in the sky betoken war. If this is so, the Union Jack, which I took to be a good omen for the troubles then threatening in Ireland, was heralding the approach of the most hideous war the world has ever seen, which broke out some eight or nine months later.

The road Richard would follow from the village of Disley to Lyme, rises precipitately almost from the entrance gates up a tremendous hill and goes right past the Cage, a building set on one of the highest points of the park. This road, now grassed over and called "the Cut," leads straight to the house, which rises into view in all its glory at the end of an avenue of lime trees. Thorns are planted, skirting the road on one side, up to the last hundred yards or so. These, owing perhaps to the altitude, seem never to have grown, but, according



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to the old pictures, have remained much the same size for perhaps two hundred years.

The extraordinary charm and fascination of Lyme is felt by all who have ever stayed there. The variety of the scenery, the lie of the ground, the wildness and grandeur of its moorland, where, in parts, one might fancy oneself hundreds of miles from any human habitation, are distinctive features of the domain. These, combined with enchanting stretches of ground covered with bracken, and hollows shaded by grand old trees, with the purity and bracing freshness of the air, make it a place quite unique. It possesses indeed a character of its own impossible to define or describe. It casts its spell over even a casual visitor; what wonder, then, that its owners have, for generations, felt it to be the only spot on earth for them—the land of their heart's desire!

Having lost both his parents, his father, when he was still quite a child, and his mother before he was fifteen, Richard Legh, on his marriage, adopted his wife's relatives as his own. His relations with his father-in-law, Mr. (afterwards Sir Thomas) Chicheley, whom he always addressed and spoke of as "my father," were of the happiest possible description. He had a great respect for his opinion and was guided and directed by him in all his public life. He consulted him on even the smallest and most trivial matters, down to the selection of a piece of furniture or suit of clothes, and never dreamt of taking any serious step without his sanction or approval.

The date of Thomas Chicheley's birth is uncertain.\* The "Dictionary of National Biography" places it at 1618, but this is manifestly impossible, Sir Thomas Chicheley—his father—having died in 1616 at the age of thirty-eight. It does not appear in the Wimpole parish registers, where a gap of fourteen years occurs from 1603 to 1617, and, at the foot of the page, after the last entry in 1603, there are inscribed these significant words:

"The leaf wanting was rent out by the Parliament Soldiers."

\* In Foxcroft's "Life of the First Marquis of Halifax" (p. 22), Thomas Chicheley is described in 1683 as a vigorous man of seventy, making the date of his birth, therefore, 1613.





SIR THOMAS CHICHELEY, MASTER OF THE ORDNANCE  
TO CHARLES II

*From a Painting by William Dobson in the possession of Captain  
Fountaine, R.N., of Narford*



## RETROSPECT

We may take it, therefore, that Thomas Chicheley was born certainly not after 1616. He was High Sheriff of Cambridge in 1637, and M.P. for the county in the Long Parliament in 1640. In 1642, he was disabled from sitting, and was severely punished for his loyalty to the King, being made to pay no less a sum than £1945 into Goldsmith's Hall by way of composition for his estates. Nor was he the only sufferer in Cambridgeshire. The Rector of Wimpole parish, James Loveland, Fellow and President of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, had his rectory sequestered for his loyalty to King Charles I, from 1643 to the year of the Restoration, 1660. Amongst the articles against the poor man was the fact of his having lent the King a horse, probably after the battle of Marston Moor. He was also accused of neglecting his cure and of shocking the susceptibilities of the Puritans by allowing his curate to "play at Cards of a night."

By his first marriage,\* which took place on August 13, 1635, at the Church of Deptford St. Nicholas, with Sarah, youngest daughter of Sir William Russell of Chippenham, Cambridgeshire, Thomas Chicheley had three sons and two daughters, the eldest of whom, Elizabeth, married, in January 1660-61, Richard Legh of Lyme. Mrs. Chicheley died on January 19, 1654, and was buried "in the new vault" in Wimpole church. Thomas Chicheley then married, about 1655, Anne, daughter of Lord Keeper Coventry, and the widow of Sir William Savile of Thornhill, to whom she must have been married at the age of about sixteen, in 1629, her bridegroom being described as a high-spirited boy of seventeen.

This lady,† so renowned for her heroic defence of Sheffield Castle during the time that it was besieged by the Parliamentarians in 1644, her husband, the Governor, dying during the siege at the early age of thirty-two, was one of the great figures of the Civil War. Besides her heroism displayed under such terrible conditions, Lady Savile proved herself to be a most devoted mother both to her own children, and, after her second marriage, to her step-children.

\* Granger.

† See "The House of Lyme," p. 215.



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Her tragic experiences began very soon after her marriage,\* for early in the Civil War Sir William Savile fortified his house, Thornhill, against the Parliamentary forces. They besieged it—this fine old mansion—for generations the chief seat of the Saviles—took it, and burnt it to the ground.

Lady Savile was a devoted adherent of Charles I, and it was probably owing to his marriage with her that Thomas Chicheley was brought into closer touch with Charles II, then in exile. She was a lady of ample means, occupying after her husband's death with her eldest son, Sir George Savile, first Marquis of Halifax, the very fine house, afterwards Lord Powis's, at the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields—then a fashionable residential quarter. This house, which is still in existence, stands at the corner of Great Queen Street, and was therefore only a few doors off from Thomas Chicheley's.

It was to her care and energy that the Saviles† were indebted for that education which enabled them to hold distinguished positions, Sir George Savile, her eldest son, afterwards first Marquis of Halifax,‡ and her third son, Henry Savile,§ the sailor and diplomatist. In Lord Halifax's "Advice to a Daughter" one can trace those traits of womanly character which had made his own mother famous in his eyes, and memorable amongst the energetic and remarkable women which those times of trouble produced.

Lady Savile, who retained the name of her first husband after her second marriage, is described by Doctor Peter Barwick ||

\* Foxcroft's "Life and Letters of Sir George Savile, 1st Marquis of Halifax," p. 8.

† "The Savile Correspondence."

‡ *Savile*, Sir George, 1st Marquis of Halifax (1633–95), sent on a mission to Louis XIV in 1672; opposed the Test Act and Exclusion Bill, opposed also the execution of Stafford in 1679, circulated in MS. his "Character of a Trimmer," in which he urged Charles II to free himself from the influence of his brother in the hopes of obtaining the succession of Monmouth. He married first, Dorothy, daughter of Henry Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, by his wife Dorothy (Waller's "Sacharissa"), she died 1670 and Sir George Savile then married Gertrude, daughter of the Hon. W. Pierrepont of Thoresby, Notts.

§ *Savile*, Henry (1642–87), Gentleman of the Bedchamber to the Duke of York, 1665, took part in the war with the Dutch, Envoy Extraordinary to Louis XIV, 1679–82.

|| *Barwick*, Peter (1619–1705), physician, M.A. St. John's College, Cambridge.

## RETROSPECT

in his Life of his brother, the Rev. John Barwick, D.D.,\* of St. John's College, Cambridge, as

“a person of incomparable affection to his Majesty, of singular prudence in designing great things for his service, and of great interest and power to render them effectual by the adherence of many persons of honour, ability and loyalty to her, and particularly by my Lord Langdale's † going along with her in all things for His Majesty's service. . . . To this good Lady was owing the escape of Sir Marmaduke Langdale, who was condemned by the rebels to die; for she found out such proper hands, by presents to mollify the guards, and invented so feasible a way for his escape, that Sir Marmaduke Langdale got out of prison with little difficulty to himself and not much censure to his keepers from the rebels their masters.”

This intrepid lady was held in great suspicion by Cromwell and his party, who, however, were never able to bring any proofs against her, although they “laid snares on all sides to trap her.” ‡

A little before the battle of Worcester Lady Savile contributed £1000 towards Charles II's subsistence, £200 of which “this good King ordered to be immediately imployed for Dr. Barwick's relief during his imprisonment.” He had been of great service to Charles I, and later to Charles II in communicating to both kings the designs of the rebels. For this he was charged with high treason and committed to the Tower in 1650, being released without a trial in 1652, and renewed his management of the King's correspondence. After his release he avoided Lady Savile, with whom he had always been on terms of the greatest intimacy and affection, as he feared to expose her to the malice of their enemies.

It was no doubt owing to Lady Savile that the Stuart relics came into the possession of the Legh family. These consist of a pair of leather gauntlet gloves, beautifully embroidered in red silk and gold, the fingers preternaturally long, said to have belonged to Charles I. A dagger, with an agate handle and a fine Damascene blade on which the name “Carolus” is inscribed, and a small knife attached, also said to have belonged to the

\* *Barwick*, John (1612–1724), divine, B.A. St. John's College, Cambridge, 1635.

† *Langdale*, Marmaduke, first Baron (1598?–1661), knighted 1628.

‡ “Life of John Barwick,” by his brother, Dr. Peter Barwick.



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martyred King, is another cherished relic. It has an embossed Spanish leather case. Charles I's cloak, supposed to have been the one worn by him on the scaffold, the velvet completely faded and worn away, but the embroidered pattern still plainly visible, now covering six very fine early Chippendale chairs, must have come into possession of the Legh family about the same period.

A thorough *bon vivant* and a typical Cavalier, Thomas Chicheley was a great personage at the Court of Charles II, with whom he had considerable influence, and who always had a liking and respect for an honest man when he found one. Charles was under great obligations to Thomas Chicheley, who had lent him large sums of money, as did his son-in-law, Richard Legh, who had also risked his life in the Royal cause, and suffered many months of close imprisonment in York Castle after the Cheshire rising of 1659.

Thomas Chicheley, who had—as we have seen—been M.P. for Cambridgeshire until he was debarred from sitting in 1642, was at the Restoration again elected for the county. The sums he had lent the King during the Usurpation amounted to over £5000, and he much hoped that this money would be refunded to him at the Restoration. But poor Charles was always out at elbows, and, in spite of a laudable desire on his part to discharge his obligations, the wherewithal was never forthcoming :

“You are to pay Chicheley £5400,”\* the King writes in 1668, to Colonel Legge, Lieutenant of the Ordnance, “out of the Exchequer Customs or the moneys due to the executors of the late Daniel O’Neil for gunpowder, being the amount due by the said O’Neil to the Crown for saltpetre sold to him.” But like many other orders of a similar nature, either the money was not to be found, or else no attention was paid to the matter, and so there it ended. As far as one can make out £102 was all that Thomas Chicheley ever received towards the repayment of the King’s debt, and at his death in 1698, amongst the list of his debts mentioned in his will (amounting to over £100,000) appears the £5000, “for what I lent the King at several times,”

\* S.P. Dom.





CHARLES FIRST'S GLOVES, DAGGER, AND CHAIR COVERED  
WITH HIS CLOAK





## RETROSPECT

showing that, faithful servant though he had been to a not ungrateful master, he had had to content himself, as far as compensation went, with the will for the deed.

Like his royal master, Thomas Chicheley was pleasure-loving, and one of the accusations brought against him, probably quite unjustly, was that he did not take his work seriously enough :

“ I hear Sir Thomas Chicheley minds play more than business.” \* But he won the liking and respect of most of the courtiers, and we find Lord Clarendon † alluding to him as “ a very worthy person and my good friend.” His chief amusements were tennis, which he played very well and in which he often had the King for an opponent, and cards, which led him to keep unwontedly late hours : “ My father never comes in before ten or eleven at night,” Richard reports to his wife on one occasion, as if this were an unheard-of piece of dissipation.

Thomas Chicheley seems to have spent most of his time in London, where, of course, he had to be to attend to his parliamentary duties and to those belonging to his different appointments. He infinitely preferred this life to the seclusion of Wimpole, his beautiful Cambridgeshire home. This he had built at enormous cost somewhere between 1630 and 1640, spending on its construction and on that of his various farms and improvements on the property close upon £40,000. He was by nature extravagant, and having started life with a debt of £8000 when he left Oxford, he was never able to get clear. He spent huge sums of money on the Restoration, besides what he lent the King, and was in such low water at the time of his son John's going to sea in 1659, that he actually had to borrow £300 to give him for his outfit.

Strangely enough, staunch Royalist though he was, Thomas Chicheley must in early life have been brought much into contact with Oliver Cromwell. His first wife's brother, Sir Francis Russell's eldest son, married a daughter of the Protector, while Cromwell's youngest son became the husband of Sir Francis Russell's eldest daughter.

\* Sir G. Rawdon to Viscount Conway. (S.P. Dom.)

† Clarendon's “ History of the Rebellion,” p. 454.



## LYME LETTERS

Wimpole, one of the finest houses in Cambridgeshire, has passed through many hands since the period of its first erection. The house, built of brick of a delicate pink colour, has the large square windows with the thick sash bars which are an integral part of the design. Facing due south, it stands in a lovely and very heavily wooded park, traversed by the river Cam, and looks out upon a magnificent triple avenue of elm trees some three miles in length. Between these stretches a veritable *tapis vert* of immense width, much resembling that at Versailles. I like to fancy that these trees were planted by Sir Thomas Chicheley. Grand and splendid as they are, they may well be the elms of 280 years ago. Humphrey Repton\* in his "On Landscape Gardening," describes the place in these words :

"Wimpole abounds in beautiful shapes of ground and is richly covered with wood; like a flower in the desert, beautiful in itself, but more beautiful by its situation."

Except for the centre portion, which remains much as it was, the house has been greatly altered. It is now a very fine example of the early eighteenth century, and is described by Mr. Augustus Hare, in his "Two Noble Lives," as "a very temple of the Arts." Much of the original work is to be found in the interior, while the decorations in the chapel are amongst the *chefs-d'œuvres* of Sir James Thornhill.†

In 1686 Sir Thomas Chicheley, for financial reasons, sold Wimpole to Sir John Cutler,‡ whose daughter eloped with Charles Bodvile Robartes, second Earl of Radnor. They in turn sold it in 1710 to the Duke of Newcastle,§ who, however,

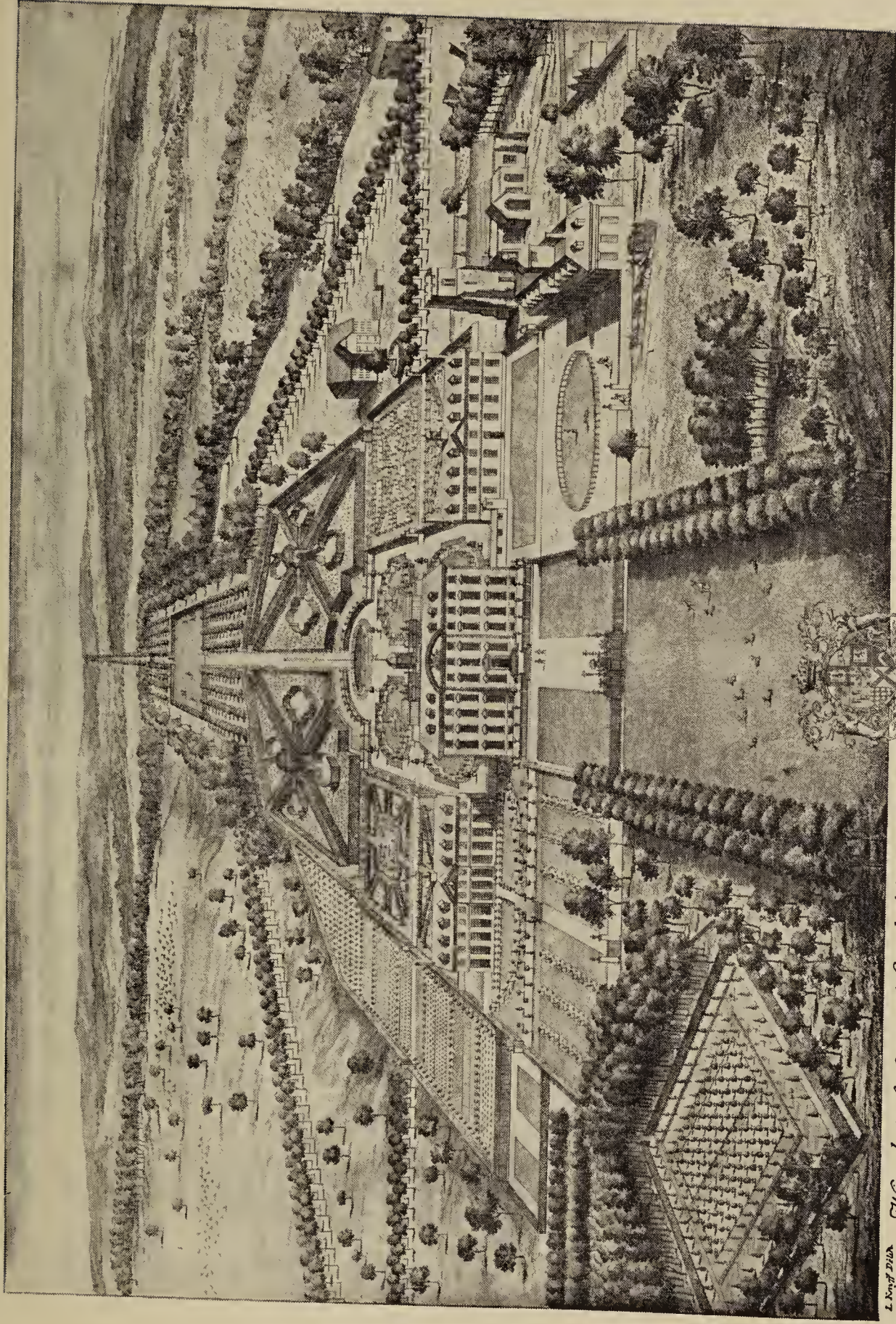
\* *Repton*, Humphrey (1752-1818), lost his fortune and became a landscape gardener by profession, being employed by the chief people of the day.

† *Thornhill*, Sir James (1675-1734), painter; travelled abroad; employed by Queen Anne in important works at Hampton Court, Greenwich and Windsor; designed paintings for the dome of St. Paul's, London; decorated Greenwich Hospital and many country houses.

‡ *Cutler*, Sir John (1608?-1693), London merchant; created baronet, 1660; one of his two daughters married before June 1689, Charles Bodvile Robartes, second Earl of Radnor, and died s.p. January 1696; Lord Radnor died 1723.

§ *Newcastle*, John Holles, last Duke of that family; his only daughter, Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, married, October 31, 1713, Edward Harley, second





L. Knapp Delin.

Wimpole in the County of Cambridge the Seat  
Baron of Truro Viscount Bodmyn and Earl of

T. Kip Sculp.

of y<sup>e</sup> R<sup>ty</sup> Hon<sup>ble</sup> Charles Bodville Lord Robartes  
Radnor Esq<sup>r</sup> & Custos Rotulorum of y<sup>e</sup> County of Cornwall

# WIMPOLE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

From an Engraving by Kip in the possession of the Hon. Gerald Agar-Robartes







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only enjoyed it for a very short period, being killed in 1711 by a fall from his horse. He left Wimpole with all his other possessions to his only daughter and heiress, Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, who, in 1713, married Edward Harley, afterwards second Earl of Oxford. They spent enormous sums on the house, adding two wings, which are quite in keeping with the centre block and in no way a blemish. Not so, however, are the two additional wings built by Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, who bought the place in 1738 after the ruin of Lord Oxford, and who also, in 1748, rebuilt the church which almost adjoins the house.\*

The old Chicheley Chauntry contains a very fine Jacobean monument, erected to the memory of Sir Thomas Chicheley, who died in 1616, the father of our Sir Thomas. This consists of a coloured stone and alabaster recumbent figure; beneath it is the following inscription :

“ Here resteth in assurance to rise in Christ Sr Thomas Chicheley of Wimpole, Knight, sometime Lord of this Towne, and patron of this Church, son of Thomas Chicheley Esq and Anne his wife, daughter of Sr John Bourn, who was Secretary to Queen Mary and of her Privie Council. The which Sr Thomas married Dorotheie, one of the daughters and co-heiress of Sr Thomas Kempe of Ollanteygh in the county of Kent, Knight, by whom he was made the joyful father of six children, Dorotheie, Anna, Jane, Thomas, Henry, and John. He left this life 12 Nov. in the year of Our Lord 1616, being the 38 year of his age, to whose dear memory Dorotheie his wife hath piously erected this monument.”

This has been cruelly damaged, one of the legs of the alabaster statue broken in two, and the little kneeling figures of the sons and daughters, placed round the base of the tomb, crowded out by Hardwicke monuments of comparatively recent date. Almost the entire centre of the chapel is occupied by an early Victorian recumbent statue, in white marble, of one of the

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Earl of Oxford; they had one only daughter and heir, Margaret Cavendish, celebrated by Prior as “ my noble lovely little Peggy,” who married, in 1734, William, second Duke of Portland.

\* Curiously enough, the place has now returned to the Robartes family, being owned by the Hon. Gerald Agar-Robartes, eldest surviving son of Viscount Clifden.

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Hardwicke family, embellished with a huge coronet and with the date, 1844.

Wimpole suggests dignity, space and grandeur, a type of mansion that we shall see erected never again. The garden side shows its beautiful front apparently untouched—except for the Oxford additions, with the original window frames as they were in 1640, the later wings not being visible from this side. The warm red brick shows up well against the dark foliage of the glorious trees that cluster round the house. A stately Home of England indeed, the old atmosphere clinging about it still, redolent of the past and of the spacious days that we shall see again no more.

What pictures of the past suggest themselves to our imagination! We can fill the rooms with a crowd of merry, laughing children, for Mr. Chicheley keeps open house and makes a home for all his relations. We see the bustling domestics hurrying to and fro, directed by my Lady, who is a strict and capable housewife. The place is alive with the coaches setting down their loads; mounted messengers dash up the avenue bringing the last news from London, for Thomas Chicheley is a person of importance, and has to be kept informed of all that goes on at Court and elsewhere during the short periods of time that he spends with his family at Wimpole. Entertaining too is lavishly dispensed. We have it on the authority of the great Pepys himself that Thomas Chicheley is a man who lives in great state—too great indeed for his purse as time will show—“with all things in a most extraordinary manner noble and rich about him and eats in the French fashion all.”

Here, too, we can picture Richard Legh riding over from Cambridge University—only nine miles away—to woo and win his fair Elizabeth. We see him wandering by her side through the shady groves and leafy glades of the lovely park, in all the glory of the golden summer days. We seem to see him, scarcely realising his own great happiness, as he goes down on one knee before her to kiss her hand in the courtly fashion of the time; and we almost hear her shy whisper of consent, as she plights her troth to the man who becomes henceforth the lodestar of her life.





WIMPOLE AS IT IS. GARDEN SIDE

*By permission of the Hon. Gerald Agar-Robartes*





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There is no mention of their marriage in the Wimpole registers, but we know from the letters that it was celebrated on January 1, 1660-1, though where the ceremony took place does not appear.

Although the two houses are some distance apart, there was a constant communication kept up between them. Presents were continually sent from Wimpole to Lyme, apples, grapes and fruit of all kinds, unobtainable in the cold Cheshire climate, the compliment being returned by cheeses, ale and brawns being despatched from Lyme. Elizabeth writes an undated letter soon after her marriage, to her step-mother, acknowledging the receipt of clothes for her young sister Sarah Chicheley, then paying a visit to her married sister at Lyme. Elizabeth was a very poor scribe, and Richard generally had to make her rough drafts of what she was to say, her spelling being most erratic :

“MADAM,

“I am afraid mine are too troublesome to your Ladyship now you are diverted with soe much good company, but I had rather err of that side in often acknowledging that duty I must ever owe to your Ladyship, than be guilty of the least neglect, therefore I hope your pardon. I received a box with Baby's coat which fits very well, but the petticoat I have lengthened a handful, the rest of the things came safe for which she returns very many thanks. If I could but know when to expect your Ladyship here, noe news wold be more welcome to

“Your most obedient daughter.”

Albeit much attached to his wife, Lady Savile, Thomas Chicheley appears to have left her very much to herself to discharge the duties and cope with all the worries connected with the management of a large estate :

“Dear Daughter,” she writes to her step-daughter on November 26, 1661,

“I had need beg your excuse for my long silence which I have been betrayed into, partly from want of health and partly from business, which you will wonder how I should find here, but by accident of your Father's sudden parting with Joe Pridd, I am forced to be Bailiff till he can get a better, and then I shall readily resign my office, which brings me in vexation enough. Your brother sometimes assists me

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in it, which, besides his company is so necessary to me that I cannot well spare him, though at present Wimpole is no very inviting place to a young man that loves either sports or conversation."

The young man whom she here alludes to as "loving sports and conversation," was probably her third surviving son by her first marriage, Henry (born at Rufford Abbey in 1642), just back from making the grand tour in company with the Earl of Sunderland\* and Henry Sidney.† In the British Museum are several letters written to him during his absence abroad by his mother. They are marked by the strongest affection and deep religious feeling, and are by no means devoid of wit:

"Harry," ‡ she writes from Wimpole on October 26, 1661, referring to his miraculous escape from some great danger,

"Yours from Thurin has giuen mee abundant matter of thanksgiving to God for yr deliverance from so imminent danger, hoping you will make it a part of your daily devotion to the latest day of your life, so rescued, not to spend in pleasures but to ye glory of its preserver. . . . Maugre§ all ye temptations y<sup>u</sup> shall meet with where religion, Catholicke, as they tearme it, allowes such dishonest practises that Christianity receives too open scandalls by it. I have reason to take it kindly that I was, to yr belief, in yr dying thoughts, hopeing y<sup>u</sup> will retaine mee in yr more vigorous ones, & not reserve mee, as some old women too ordinarily are, purely for Mortification, for albeit I will not exact thought for thought from y<sup>u</sup>, yet in some proportion to remember a mother that cannot forget her sonne is but justice from y<sup>u</sup>."

She sends messages of congratulation from her husband Thomas Chicheley, "who has sent his younger sonn wth ye fleet, where he was presently seasoned with a sea-fight against ye Turke, towards ye making him a sea-man." This was John, afterwards

\* *Sunderland*, Robert Spencer, second Earl (1640–1702), only son of Henry, first Earl by his wife Dorothy (Waller's "Sacharissa"), married in 1665, the heiress Anne Digby, younger daughter of George Digby, second Earl of Bristol by his wife Anne Russell. Anne Digby became ultimate heir to her father's large fortune.

† *Sidney*, Henry, Earl of Romney (1641–1702), brother of Algernon, was the handsomest man of his day; groom-of-the-bedchamber to James, Duke of York, and in 1665 master-of-the-horse to the Duchess, was envoy to France in 1672; intrigued with William of Orange.

‡ Letters of the Savile and Finch families, 1626–1720. (British Museum.)

§ *maugre*, in spite of.



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Sir John Chicheley, of whom we shall hear in a subsequent chapter.

In a later letter, written on February 16, 1661-2, she remonstrates with her son on his illegible writing, and protests against the extortionate terms of the messengers of the day, begging that Henry will in future not employ "such Mercuryes," this particular one demanding to be paid five shillings a sheet

"which greater writers have not allowed to theirs . . . this last fellow pretended to have come 26 miles beyond ye place his businesse ledd him to & that he had spent more in coming by much than 5s wch he tooke, but wth great disdaine went ranting highly away, therefore for prevention of my being imposed upon y<sup>e</sup> future, I pray write by ye Cambridge carrier wth directions to leave ym att ye Redd Lyon Inn, from whence I shall not faile to have them. . . . I cannot but compassionate ye decay of strength that will not permit yr hand without wearinesse to write so as to be read, if y<sup>u</sup> call those characters I thinke I may tearme some of yr former Hieroglyphicks wch those that make them only can render intelligible, I have noe more to add att present but this, that y<sup>u</sup> will be carefull in all things to so demeane yrselfe as not to frustrate my hopes of y<sup>u</sup> that am

"Yr very aff Mother." \*

Henry Savile was much attached to his mother, spending all the time he could spare with her at Wimpole. He also adopted all his step-brothers and sisters as his own :

"Dear Sister," he writes on July 13, 1662, to Elizabeth Legh :

"Having been all the time of my absence out of England soe little guilty of troubling you in this nature that you cannot accuse me of having made you lose any time in reading soe much as one of my letters . . . I am forced to take this more imperfect way of expressing the joy I have to be but in the same Country with you, nor doe I yet despair of having the honour to see you if my Mother make her Cheshire journey this summer. If in the mean time I can be serviceable to you heere, I shall endeavour to shew you by a ready obedience to all your commands, that, though others may be more fortunate, no man alive shall be more zealous in your service then, Deare Sister,

"Your most affectionate brother

"most humble servant

"HEN: SAVILE."

\* Letters of the Savile and Finch families, 1626-1720. (British Museum.)

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His mother Lady Savile's Cheshire journey, to which he alludes, was destined not to be. She had never spared herself in working unceasingly for the Royal cause. She had fought against the conspiracies and tyranny of the most inveterate enemies of the Crown, and had successively foiled many of their schemes, even winning over to the King's interest persons of note and standing in the parliamentary army. Though she lived to see the happy restoration of the Sovereign she loved so well and had served so faithfully, she lived also to realize that the idol she had worshipped was only very human after all. Splendid though he had proved himself to be in adversity, he had, on his return to prosperity, fallen far short of her ideal. Her King could do no wrong, but she had expected more of him. Of great piety herself, the irreligion and profligacy of his Court were a source of the deepest grief to her, and her disappointment and disillusionment at his apparent neglect and forgetfulness of his old and devoted friends, sapped her vitality and broke her heart.

Her health impaired beyond hope of recovery, sick and "weary of an age so wicked and so ungrateful to God," \* she retired to Wimpole in the summer of 1662, there to await the end. One of the last letters she wrote—if not the very last—was to her beloved Henry. In it she speaks of her long sickness and her joy at his return. Through all the stilted and formal language of the letters, there shines like a thread of gold the unalterable, and only really unselfish love—that of the mother—complete in its self-abnegation, giving all, and asking for no return. Thomas Chicheley writes to Richard Legh on July 27 :

"I fear I shall not be so fortunate as to see you this summer, by reason of my wife's sickness which continues on her still, and now hath left the town with a resolution to leave herself to God Almighty's will; which I hope in His infinite mercy will restore her to her health, or else I am an unfortunate man, and your wife will lose the best Mother in the world, for she hath this sicknesse spoke with the greatest kindness of your wife that may be, the which she shall know when I am

\* "Life of John Barwick," by his brother, Dr. Peter Barwick.





ANNE, LADY SAVILE, SECOND WIFE OF SIR THOMAS  
CHICHELEY

*From a Painting at Lyme*





## RETROSPECT

so happy as to see you both, which shall be this summer if my wife's health will permit, it is a thing I passionately long for, who am,

“ Dear Soone

“ Your most affectionate

“ THOMAS CHICHELEY.

“ My wife sends you and your wife her blessing, and soe doe I the like.”

This was the last message ever sent by Anne Lady Savile, for she must have died on the very day that her husband's letter was written, and her burial is recorded in the Wimpole parish registers as having taken place “in the new vault” of Wimpole church on July 31, 1662.

Her death-bed advice to her husband, which unfortunately for himself he did not follow, was “to retire and not to look to or expect anything from the Court”; this shows that her faith in her beloved Sovereign had been shaken, and her hopes of better days for ever shattered. She sent for her old friend Dr. John Barwick, now Dean of St. Paul's, who came and ministered to her in her last hours, and she died peacefully surrounded by her sorrowing and devoted family.

## CHAPTER II

### SIR JOHN CHICHELEY AND THE NAVY

OF Thomas Chicheley's sons the most distinguished was his second son, John. The date of his birth is uncertain, but he joined the navy, where he ultimately obtained considerable distinction as a capable officer and an honest and straightforward man, in 1659. A pass on July 9 of that year gives permission for John Chicheley to go "beyond seas." In 1662, he was Lieutenant of the *Swiftsure* and was promoted in 1663 to be Captain of the *Milford*. He writes to his sister Elizabeth Legh 1662 on July 22, 1662, a little more than a week before the death of his step-mother, of whose serious condition—owing to his roving life—he was probably unaware :

"DEAR SISTER,

"I hope you will not impute me not coming to see you in Cheshire to any neglect of me, but to my short stay which I am like to make in England, which I will assure you is the only reason, for so soone as I came for London, I was ordered to stay there to expect the Duke's [of York] orders for the fleet, and then to return again with all possible speed I could to the intent that Sir John Lawson \* might dispose of his fleet before the winter, that he must be able to get home before the latter end of October, at which time I hope I shall have the good fortune to meet you in Towne."

From a portrait by Sir Peter Lely in the possession of Major Darby Griffiths at Padworth House, Reading, we gather that Sir John Chicheley must have been a strikingly handsome man, bearing a close resemblance to the Stuarts. The portrait ascribed to him in "The House of Lyme" has been found to

\* *Lawson*, Sir John (died 1665), Admiral, in command of ships in the Parliament's service; Vice-Admiral of the Red Squadron in the War with the Dutch, 1665, died of a wound received in action. His daughter, Isabella, widow of — Norton, married, about 1667, Sir John Chicheley by whom she had a large family.





REAR-ADMIRAL SIR JOHN CHICHELEY

*From a Mezzotint at Lyme by Browne from the Painting by Sir Peter Lely in the possession of Major Darby Griffiths*







## SIR JOHN CHICHELEY

be incorrectly named, and may possibly represent Sir John's father, Sir Thomas Chicheley. I have been fortunate enough to acquire a very fine mezzotint, engraved by Browne from the portrait by Lely of Sir John Chicheley. It is a three-quarter length, facing right to left, exactly opposite to the position in the Lely portrait. He wears a large wig, lace cravat, and satin coat, with sleeves draped up and fastened with a brooch on the right shoulder. His left hand rests on a stone pillar or bench, his right hand grasps the hilt of a sword. In the distance is a ship in full sail, with a view of a bay, and town and buildings on the opposite shore.

Ideally happy together in their beautiful home, Richard, occupied with his estate management and county business, and Elizabeth, busy with her garden and housekeeping, in which she had much to learn, the arrival of a little dark-eyed daughter in December 1663, put the crowning seal upon their bliss. Much 1663 anxiety had been displayed by Elizabeth's relatives lest she should have no children :

“ I would fain hear you were bringing your husband the most acceptable present,”

her step-mother Lady Savile had written to her about a year after her marriage, and Thomas Chicheley, her father, had expressed his anxiety much in the same strain :

“ There will not be any news so joyful to me as to hear of your safe deliverance be it either of a boy or a girl.”

There was no telegraph to flash the happy news. A mounted messenger was the only means of bringing tidings of joy or sorrow to the waiting occupants of many a home. In this case, so anxious were the Chicheleys to hear, that a relative was waiting, with his horse all ready saddled, prepared to start off on a 180 miles ride immediately the birth should take place :

“ He says he is resolved to stay and know whether it be a boy or a girl, and I shall be very impatient to hear that,”

writes a cousin to Elizabeth just before the birth of her first

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child. In the big family Bible Richard chronicles the event in his beautiful clear handwriting :

“Lettice, Dec: 2d 1663, Sir Thomas Chicheley, Lady Ardern, and Mrs. Anne Leuson Fowler, sponsors.”

(Both here and in several of the entries in the State Papers, Thomas Chicheley is spoken of as “Sir Thomas,” but he did not actually receive his knighthood officially before 1670.)

Three days later, her baptism is entered in the Disley parish register as follows :

“Dec: 5, 1663, Lettice Legh, daughter of my Master and patron Richard Legh of Lyme and Elizabeth his wife was baptized.”

Two other daughters followed in quick succession, Elizabeth, born in 1666, and Fanny, in 1667; Peter, the son and heir, making his welcome appearance in 1669. As there is nothing of any special interest to chronicle in the early years of the children's lives, I will leave them for the present and glance at the contemporary history and letters of the time as they affected the family at Lyme.

Amongst the intimate friends and correspondents of Richard and Elizabeth, one of the most important was Henry Bennet, first Earl of Arlington (1618–85), a cousin of the Chicheleys, who was a member of the Cabal ministry, Secretary of State, Keeper of the Privy Purse, and a distinguished personage at the Court of Charles II. He was a man of culture and experience, a great traveller, and, according to Evelyn, “the best bred and courtly person His Majesty had about him.” He was in 1663 the centre of opposition to Clarendon in alliance with Buckingham and Bristol.

In the reign of Charles I he had been one of the secretaries to Lord Bristol, Secretary of State. He faithfully served the King during the Civil Wars, entered as volunteer into the Royal Army and fought at Edgehill. All his portraits represent him with a large black patch across his nose, one of the honourable wounds received in the service of his King, the mark of which he carried to his grave. He followed the fortunes of Charles II, with whom he had long been a wanderer, and in



## SIR JOHN CHICHELEY

1663, received special recognition at the hands of his Sovereign, by having assigned an addition to his arms "for his fidelity and courage in the cause of the late King." \*

From his intimate knowledge of languages he became the principal person connected with foreign affairs, of which he knew more than anyone at Charles' court. He was responsible for arranging the conclusion of the Triple Alliance, formed in 1668 by Great Britain, Sweden and the Netherlands against Louis XIV, and this, owing to his supposed devotion to the French King, was said to have given him opportunities for trimming—an accusation always brought against him.

Himself the soul of honour, Richard gauged his friends according to his own high standard, nor could he conceive it possible that they could be actuated by any but the highest motives, as he was himself. There is no doubt that he was very much under the spell of Lord Arlington's charm, and that he relied upon his help and support in any political matter, believing him to be a thoroughly sincere and disinterested friend. Whether this was so, or whether he was making use of Richard amongst others of the party of country gentlemen collected by him in the House of Commons, pledged, as he boasted to the King, to vote according to the King's wishes, there is no means of knowing. But whatever Lord Arlington may have been as a statesman and politician, he certainly appears to have been a good and loyal friend to Richard, who appealed to him in many a difficulty and never appealed in vain.

On August 22, 1663, Lord Arlington writes the following letter from Whitehall to Richard at Lyme, in answer to a request from Richard that Sir Geoffry Shakerley—a Cheshire neighbour—might be appointed Governor of Chester Castle. The letter is signed "Henry Bennet," the only one of Lord Arlington's letters amongst the Legh MSS. bearing this signature, as he received his peerage this same year :

" SR,

" I am sorry I had not ye good fortune to see you at your leaving this Town to offer you my humble service here in your absence, which

\* S.P. Dom. : Charles II.

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you may very freely command whenever you have occasion for it. According to yor desire to me in yours of ye 2d currant, I have contributed all I could to ye putting Sr Geoffry Shakerley into ye government of Chester, which His Majesty hath now consented to. I hope it will be much for his service, by ye reputation which you and Others have assured me ye said gentleman had in ye County. My sister [Lady Carr] tells me wee are near hearing very good news out of your house, & wish you & yor Lady many ye like occasions, & shall be very glad of any wherein I may express with how much affection I am, Sr,

“ Your humble serv<sup>t</sup>

“ HENRY BENNET.”

He is here alluding to the expected arrival of Lettice, born the following December.

Those were days when children were looked upon as Heaven-sent blessings, and a large family was accounted the richest boon the heart of a married couple could desire. Any letter of congratulation on the birth of a child was accompanied by the hope that the new arrival might be followed by many more. The wish for posterity, the natural craving for a successor, supposed to be the strongest instinct implanted in the human race, seems to have died out and perished of inanition, killed, perhaps, by the burden of taxation and the struggle-for-life of the individual.

Very pretty, fair-haired and blue-eyed, Elizabeth was a typical example of the beauties at Charles II's Court, but in appearance only. Thanks to her excellent step-mother's careful upbringing and training, she developed into a capable housewife, besides being ornamental as a châtelaine, and a worthy help-mate to the husband she adored. Possessed of a strong will and of a hasty and difficult temper, she was, however, as wax in the hands of the man she worshipped with an adoring and abiding love that knew neither weariness nor change. He was the idol of her life, the pivot round which all her being revolved; her every thought was of him and for him, and in the selfishness of her all-absorbing love, she resented, and as far as possible opposed, his enforced absences from home, making it more hard than ever for him to leave her.



## SIR JOHN CHICHELEY

"Dearest Hart," writes her father, Thomas Chicheley, to 1664 her in an undated letter of about 1664 or 1665 :

"I should be as glad to see your Husband here as anybody, but when I know your unwillingness to part with him, I will forbear to invite him up unless I see urgent necessity for his coming, and then I hope you will spare him for a while and entertain yourself with my God-daughter," [Lettice, aged about two] "of whom I find you are not a little fond. I pray God continue that blessing to you and your husband, and send you many more. There is many visitants threaten you the next summer. . . . This is all the news worth your knowing, but you may tell your Husband that my Lord Bristol had like to be taken, and what would have followed I know not, but I fear we shall have some trouble with him, though not so much as his Champions thought to have given both the King and House."

George Digby, second Earl of Bristol (1612-77), had in July 1663 unsuccessfully impeached Lord Clarendon, whom he accused of various acts of high treason, in revenge, it was supposed, for the Lord Chancellor's having foiled Digby's scheme of an Italian match for the King.

The House unanimously supported the three judge's opinion that "the whole charge contained nothing of treason though it were all true." \*

A proclamation was issued for the apprehension of Lord Bristol. The King, "who was angry with himself that he had not immediately sent him to the Tower," \* being most indignant, as his Majesty considered that the Articles reflected more upon himself than they did upon Lord Clarendon. Lord Bristol had therefore to fly the country, and for two years he was forced to live in concealment. It was not until Lord Clarendon's disgrace that Lord Bristol ventured to reappear at Court, where he came "in great triumph and shewed a more impotent malice than was expected from his generosity and understanding." \*

To return to the Legh family. A later letter from Thomas Chicheley to his son-in-law, Richard, discloses the fact that Elizabeth gained her ends about keeping her beloved :

"I am sorry we shall not see you here this parliament. I finde your wife is a cunning gipsie, for she answered my letter because she thought

\* Clarendon's Life.

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you could not tell so formal a story. But if your business be not extraordinary, I could wish you here, for here will be business of as great concerne as hath been any sessions."

It needed all Richard's steadfastness and high sense of duty to tear himself away from the joys and felicity of his life at Lyme, and especially so when he was leaving his Elizabeth in delicate health and therefore more than ever dependent on his loving care. But he never shrank from doing his duty at whatever cost it might be to himself, and whenever his presence was demanded in London or elsewhere, he unhesitatingly set all other considerations aside and started on his weary ride, which, in the event of London being his destination, would occupy three, or even four days' hard riding. As showing the fatigue resulting from these long journeys, an eighteenth-century letter of about 1740, amongst the Legh MSS., speaks of the writer being so fatigued riding post from Daventry to London in one day, that he was fit for nothing for two days afterwards.

Lady Savile's death was a great blow to Thomas Chicheley. He realized, perhaps too late, that he had not sufficiently appreciated her as she deserved, and it was only after she was gone, that he became fully aware how much her gentle influence had meant in his life, and how he had relied upon her wise judgment and shrewd common sense. Although, in his selfishness and with his pleasure-loving nature, he had left her very often alone at Wimpole while he was enjoying all the entertainments and dissipations of the Court and society, he had always had the comfort of knowing that her loving welcome would greet him on his return to the peace and rest of his beautiful Cambridgeshire home. Her loss, therefore, made a great blank in his life; he missed her more and more, and, in spite of the devoted attentions of his two daughters, he seemed for a time quite crushed by his desolation.

His work he found a solace and distraction. He was again representing Cambridgeshire in Parliament and was in 1664 appointed, with Lord Berkeley of Stratton and Sir John Duncombe, one of the Commissioners to execute the office of Master of the Ordnance. They were each to receive a salary of 200



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marks a year with wages for four servants. Later on Thomas Chicheley was knighted, was sworn of the privy council, and was appointed Master of the Ordnance, the former patent to be revoked, and "for his prudent circumspection and managery in that office" \* he was to receive £1500 a year. He was also appointed Master of the Arms and Armoury in the Tower, this post to go with the other. The payments, however, were very irregular, and he had to make constant, and generally futile, applications for his money.

By 1665 Thomas Chicheley was evidently seeking consolation : "My father Chicheley's addresses to my Lady Carlisle do now begin to make a noise," † Henry Savile writes on May 4th to his brother, Sir George Savile. The lady in question was Margaret, third daughter of Francis, fourth Duke of Bedford, and widow of James (Hay) Earl of Carlisle. This lady, however, rejected the advances of Thomas Chicheley, marrying in 1667, as his *fifth* wife, Edward Montagu, second Earl of Manchester.

Thomas Chicheley never married again. He was, however, a great ladies' man, and was continually paying attention to some member of the fair sex, thereby causing his family much uneasiness.

Meantime the war with the Dutch, in which John Chicheley participated, was occupying the attention of the King and Parliament. John Chicheley was in 1664 Captain of the *Bristol*, and the following year, 1665, was in command of the *Antelope*, a 4th-rater, one of the ships in the Red Squadron, taking part on June 3 in the action between the Duke of York and Opdam. John Chicheley so distinguished himself that he was knighted shortly after the encounter, and was promoted in 1666 to succeed Sir Christopher Myngs ‡ (mortally wounded), in the command of the *Fairfax*, a 3rd-rater, also in the Red Squadron, in the four days' fight off the North Foreland, where he achieved more distinction. Peace was signed with the Dutch on July 31, 1667.

\* S.P. Dom.

† "The Savile Correspondence."

‡ *Myngs*, Sir Christopher (1625-1666); Vice-Admiral; knighted 1665; led the van on the fourth day of the battle off the North Foreland, June 1-4, 1666, and was mortally wounded.

## LYME LETTERS

1668 In 1668 Sir John Chicheley commanded the *Rupert*, 64 guns, in the Mediterranean with Sir Thomas Allin,\* and on Sir Thomas's return to England, Chicheley remained commanding in the second post under Sir Edward Spragge,† and was appointed Vice-Admiral of his Majesty's Fleet in the Straits.

The authorities were evidently anxious to show their appreciation of the new Admiral in a practical manner, for we find in the State Papers of December 9, 1667, a warrant ‡ to the Duke of York to order the Navy Treasurer to pay £500 to Sir John Chicheley "for services at Sea out of the moneys arising from the sale of Ships after payment of £4000 already ordered." It was one thing, however, to order the money to be paid, and quite another matter to get it done, for when Sir John presented his bill for payment of the money, the reply he received was that "this cannot be complied with, as more than that sum was paid before the bill was made." §

The mismanagement and neglect of the navy during the Protectorate had left the Department practically bankrupt. || No wages were ever paid; the debt to the seamen alone amounted to nearly half a million. Ships were left unpaid for years, and the corruption and cupidity of the officials was only equalled by their ineptitude and incompetence. Even Pepys, admirable public servant though he proved himself to be, can at the Restoration have known very little of accounts, as he was apparently learning the multiplication table for the first time in 1662. ¶

\* *Allin*, Sir Thomas (1612–1685); naval commander; fought against the Dutch in the Mediterranean, 1664, and at Lowestoft, 1665; comptroller of the Navy in 1670–8.

† *Spragge*, Sir Edward (died 1673), Admiral, took part in the great battle of June 1666 under Prince Rupert, and commanded at Sheerness, when the Dutch forced the Medway in 1667. Took a brilliant part in the battle of Sole Bay in 1672. Served in three actions in 1673, against Van Tromp, in the third of which he was drowned.

‡ S.P. Dom., December 9, 1667. Whitehall.

§ S.P. Dom. (No. 188), John Fenn to Samuel Pepys, Ap. 2, 1669. Exchequer.

|| "The Navy of the Restoration," by Arthur W. Tedder, B.A.

¶ Pepys's "Diary"—July 4, 1662. "Comes Mr. Cooper mate of the 'Royall Charles' of whom I intend to learn mathematiques, and do begin with him to-day, he being a very able man, and no great matter I suppose will content him. After an hours being with him at Arithmetique, my first attempt being to learn the Multiplication Table, then we parted till to-morrow."



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The streets of London and all the seaport towns were full of poor unfortunate starving seamen ; mutinies and riots were of frequent occurrence, want and famine turning men almost to madness. This was the condition of affairs in the navy when the Duke of York was appointed Lord High Admiral of England on May 16, 1660. The task of reorganization and reconstruction was a herculean one, but he put both heart and will into the work, and what he lacked in practical experience was more than compensated for by the personal interest he took in every detail, and his undoubted administrative capacity. To his credit be it said, that the reforms that he instituted and the navy as he made it, remained without any vital changes until about one hundred years ago.

It was, of course, impossible to carry out all the reforms and changes at once, in spite of hard work and good will on the part of the Duke and his subordinates, and it was many years before there was any real amelioration in the lives of the unhappy seamen. One of the most direct subjects of grievance, after that of the bad and insufficient victualling, was the "ticket" system.\* This was a kind of I.O.U. signed by the officers of the man's ship, giving all particulars as to his qualifications and length of service. This had to go before the Navy Board for further signatures, and if the man was lucky, half his wages were paid him in ready money, and the other half were nominally to be paid in three months' time. Had the payments been regular there would have been little or no hardships attaching to this system, but the delays and uncertainty of receiving any payment whatever caused the utmost suffering and mental distress amongst the unfortunate seamen, so that it is not surprising that there should have been great difficulty in obtaining sufficient quantities of men for the service. The press-gang was always hard at work, and on April 8, 1668, appears a notice from Mr. Wren to the Navy Commissioners to order Captain Baker † to attend Sir John Chicheley with "the Roe Kitchin and to ply off the coast of Norfolk to impress men for the

\* "The Navy of the Restoration," Tedder.

† S.P. Dom. (No. 39). Whitehall.

## LYME LETTERS

‘Rupert,’ ” Sir John’s ship, desiring him also to furnish him with provisions and victuals.

On June 2, 1668,\* Sir John Chicheley writes to Pepys :

“I am just going down to my ship, and request you to put Lord Anglesey† in mind of ordering money for the tickets due to the men on board. I am going for the Downs, so if not speedily paid my men will have but too much reason to suspect there was a trick to get them on board.”

It was repugnant to an upright, honourable man like Sir John Chicheley to have to countenance such dealings, nor could he endure to see his men lacking the proper food for their own sustenance, nor the means for the support of their families. He therefore constantly paid the men out of his own pocket, although he could very ill afford to do so, hoping to be reimbursed in time from the Exchequer.

“Sir William Penn‡ being ill, I request your assistance,” he writes to Pepys on July 23, 1668, “to get signed an imprest bill for money disbursed out of my own pocket in conduct money to 200 men that were honest enough to come to the ship.” §

The same difficulties existed with regard to obtaining clothes for the men. These were sold on board the ships, the prices being at a fixed rate settled by the ships’ officers. Debts for clothes could be put on the seamen’s tickets, which, as the men received no ready money for their wages, was a concession practically unavoidable under the circumstances. “Some of those who attended in order to get the ship out, cannot get their clothes,” || Sir John complains to Pepys, who always did his best to help.

The dread of invasion was ever present in men’s minds, and an undated letter from Richard Legh to his wife, written from London to Lyme on New Year’s Day, probably between the

\* S.P. Dom. (No. 13).

† *Anglesey*, Arthur Annesley, first Earl (1614–86), Treasurer of the Navy in 1667; dismissed in 1682 for adverse criticism of the King’s Government.

‡ *Penn*, Sir William (1621–70), Admiral and general at sea.

§ S.P. Dom., July 23. Pembroke.

|| S.P. Dom., May 4. Chatham.



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years 1661 and 1668,\* reports a serious scare of a raid by the French, which, however, happily came to nothing :

“ DEAREST,

“ This night I gott safe to Towne, I thanke God, neither I nor any of us gott a fall. I went first to my father’s,† found nobody at home—all at Sir George Savile’s,‡ where they dined. My sister Sarah § came presently, who is the very same, but grown very much. My brother Jack || is now with me. My father was at cards at Sir George’s and could not come.

“ My brother tells me great news that the French have shipped thirty thousand foot and horse with Mattocks, Pickaxes and Shovels. The King has commanded my Lord Gerard, my Lord Hawley and my Lord of Oxford’s Troops to march forthwith to the Sea-side, and the most of the Sea Officers are to march to their Commands at Sea, to give what opposition they can, so that itt is thought the Parliament will not sitt above a Fortnight. By my next I shall enlarge more. Shew this news only to my brother [Thomas Legh]. God in Heaven blesse thee and thine is the rest from,

“ Dearest, Thine whilst

“ R. LEGH.”

The great fire of London which raged from September 2 to 6, 1666, followed the Plague, but there is no mention of either in the Legh Letters. From the State Papers we find that Thomas Chicheley was acting as a sort of Special Constable on September 3, protecting people’s houses and goods. The impossibility of dealing with the fire (otherwise than by demolishing the houses) until it had burnt itself out, made it necessary to provide people with some protection for their goods. For this purpose the City was divided into five posts : Temple Bar, Clifford’s Inn Gardens, Fetter Lane, Shoe Lane, and Cow Lane, at each of which constables of the respective parishes were ordered to attend, during the fire, each with 100 men. At every post there were to be 30 foot “ with a good careful

\* It was in 1666.

† Thomas Chicheley.

‡ *Sir George Savile* (1633–95), his half-brother, afterwards first Marquis of Halifax; eldest son of Sir William Savile of Thornhill, Yorkshire, by his wife, Anne, daughter of Lord Keeper Coventry, who married secondly Thomas Chicheley of Wimpole.

§ *Sarah Chicheley*, youngest daughter of Thomas Chicheley by his first wife. Sarah Chicheley married about 1672, Andrew Fountaine of Salle, with whom she led a most unhappy life.

|| Sir John Chicheley.

## LYME LETTERS

officer" and three gentlemen, who were to have power to give one shilling "to any who are diligent att night; these are to be relieved from the country tomorrow." Five pounds in bread, cheese and beer were to be allowed to every post. Two companies of Train Bands were to guard people's goods in Lincoln's Inn Fields, Grey's Inn Fields, Hatton Garden and St. Giles Fields, and "a great officer" was to go round and see the orders executed. At Temple Bar Thomas Chicheley was to attend in company with Lord Belasyse\* and a certain Hugh May.

Fires were of constant occurrence, and, as might well be expected, caused the greatest alarm. A serious outbreak occurred at St. Katherine's Docks in 1672, where Sir Thomas Chicheley, then knighted, proved himself very active:

"April 2.† Mr. Montagu and Sir Thomas Chicheley came from the King. The former returned immediately to inform the King that the Tower was out of danger, he seeing that houses had been blown up and the distance of the fire from it. Sir Thomas Chicheley stayed and afforded his utmost assistance by ordering the things wanting out of the Ordnance Office."

On January 30, 1672-3, Richard Legh, writing to his brother from London, reports another serious fire:

"There happened a sad fire in the Navy Office on Tuesday night; itt began in a store of sweetmeats in my Lord Brunkard's ‡ house, has burnt above 20 houses and they say all the papers of ye Naval accounts."

Again in a letter of April 15 of this same year he says:

"I was writing to you on Saturday last when suddenly the news came at 9 att night that att Charing Crosse there was a great fire and Whitehall in danger, which made me fling all aside and goe, but God be thanked, itt was presently quenched, only the upper story of one house burnt."

\* *Belasyse*, John, Baron Belasyse (1614-89), royalist; created Baron, 1645; fought for Charles I in many engagements; first Lord Commissioner of the Treasury in 1687.

† S.P. Dom.

‡ *Brouncker*, or Brounker, William, second Viscount in the Irish peerage (1620?-84); first President of the Royal Society. Commissioner for executing the office of Lord High Admiral, 1664; Master of St. Catherine's Hospital, 1681.





FRANCES STUART, DUCHESS OF  
RICHMOND

*By Cooper, from a Miniature at Lyme*



LADY CARR

*By Cooper, from a Miniature at Lyme*





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“Last night was a fire in ye Temple,” writes another correspondent some years later, “burnt 2 staircases and chambers and 2 or 3 houses in ye Fryers, continued about 3 hours. Sr Thomas Robinson, Treasurer of ye house and 2 or 3 clerks were burnt up in their Chambers; 7 other clerks ventured to go through ye Fire and had no hurt only their clothes scorched a little. Sr Tho. coming down for ye same purpose being almost stifled with smoke returned and turned some bedding and other things out of ye window designing to fall on them, made his attempt but broke his neck. Ye fire happened by a clerk who came in drunk and was careless of his candell; some say he is burnt, some say fled.”

Amongst the intimate friends of Richard and Elizabeth Legh, mentioned from time to time in the letters, were Sir Robert and Lady Carr of Sleaford, Yorkshire. Sir Robert Carr held some post at Court and was chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in which post he was succeeded at his death in 1682 by Sir Thomas Chicheley.

Lady Carr was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Bennet of Dawley, and a sister of Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington. She was a charming and most attractive woman, and a great friend and constant correspondent of the Leghs. She was supposed to be an authority on furniture and works of art, and to have great taste and knowledge. The friends therefore constantly exchanged views and ideas as to furniture and decoration for their respective houses, and Richard, who thought very highly of her opinion, consulted her on many details in connection with the redecorating of the rooms at Lyme, and never went up to London without paying her a visit. A charming miniature of Lady Carr by Cooper is preserved at Lyme. Richard, in a letter to his wife written from London about 1667, mentions acquiring it: “My Lady Carr’s son has been ill of the meazels and now she is down of them, but very hearty. Her picture I have.”

“My Dearest Deare,” he writes from London on January 3, 1666, to Elizabeth, detained at Lyme in expectation of the arrival of a baby:

“Thine was most welcome to me. I hope thou hast received mine of Tuesday last, though I was in much disorder when I writt it, being

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just come to Towne. I have been several times with my Father, once I dined there since I came, and I delivered yours to my Lady Carr (who has a brave boy) and said she would write to you ere this. By the next post I hope to resolve with my Father either to come speedily to thee or to stay till the weather be" [word missing in the MS.] "that thou mayest come up. The weather is so cold and dangerous that there is no thoughts of my stirring whilst it lasts, and the most unpleasant being in Towne that ever I saw upon several accounts. . . . The next week I intend to go with my brother Jack to see a Mistress in Kent, and he tells me her Mother is like to be our Stepmother, but more of this hereafter."

Thomas Chicheley was disposing of his coach :

"My Father would have me buy his Coach which he says is a very handsome one ; it is of crimson Damaske and but just made, but unless we resolve to send for thee it will be of noe purpose."

On January 8 he writes again :

"DEAREST, I perceive by thy last of ye 3d Dec. thou hast not received mine, this being the third I have writt to thee since I came to Towne. I dare not as yet affix my name to the back side lest they shold (not knowing my hand) neglect the sending of them, but deare Soule, doe not trouble thyself if a post should slipp, for assure thyself I shall not. The weather is now breaking here ; if God send itt holds on and the Parl: sitts, I shall take orders for sending for thee or come down to thee as speedily as possible. I weigh every minute double without thee. The coach I mentioned in my last is sold, and my Father this morning bought Mr. Palmer's Chamber \* and all the Furniture in itt. I was with him to witness the possession. It is a fine Chamber in Grays Inn and full of fine Curiosities, Pictures, tables, Stands and Cabinetts. . . . Deare Heart I am never so pleased as when I am writing to thee ; Now I am quitt from company, it is 2 o'clock i'th night and I am not sleepy and I cannot leave off. Noe news is pleasant to me but what I have from thee that thou and thine are well. The God of all mercies continue itt soe amongst us, and if itt be His blessed will enlarge his blessings to us which is the continued prayers of Deare Soule

"Thy unfeigned loving husband  
"R. LEGH."

\* It is difficult to understand why Thomas Chicheley bought this "fine Chamber," as he was in possession of his house in Great Queen Street more than a year later, in 1667-8, where Pepys dined with him on March 11, 1667-8. (See "The House of Lyme," p. 393).



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With regard to what Richard says about the signing of his name outside his letters, the franking of letters was claimed by the House of Commons in 1660, but the claim was rejected by the House of Lords. The indenture deposited with the letters patent appointing Henry Bishop Postmaster-General in 1660, expressly allowed the free transport of letters to or from the King, the great officers of State, and single inland letters to the M.P.'s for that session only. The practice, however, was carried on till it was expressly granted in 1764. Then each member could send ten free letters every day, not exceeding 1 oz. in weight, and receive fifteen. All that was necessary was to write the name or title in the corner. This privilege—as might be expected—was much abused.

Richard's next letter, dated January 19, 1666, announces his approaching return to his Elizabeth :

“ DEAREST HART, . . . In my last I desired thee to command Will and Bowdon to bring the old hunting horse, the Coachman's gelding and the young Gelding to be att Stone upon Saturday night, the 26th inst: Sett them baits at the Talke \* and then come to the Swan in Stone and if I be not there, then to come to Lichfield. Tomorrow I dine with my Lady Carr. After dinner I must goe to my Father to talk with him about Jacks' † marriage with Mistress Norton, who is a pretty woman and seems to be of a very good disposition, and I think itt will be a match. My prayers are for thee and thine who am

“ Thy constant true loving husband

“ R. LECH.

“ You are so beholding to my Father, that, upon discourse with him he said, were you not his daughter, he would sooner marry you than any woman in England; next to you he had the belief that Mistress Norton would be a good wife. Jack is your servant—soe is

“ R. LECH.”

There was great excitement in Lady Carr's family in 1666, 1666

\* *Talke o' th' Hill*, a village on the borders of Cheshire and Staffordshire, a favourite stopping place, where they changed horses.

† Sir John Chicheley in 1667 married Mrs. Norton. She was a daughter of Sir John Lawson. She is described by Pepys (August 29, 1666, p. 383) as being very pretty: “ Sir W. Penn tells me that Mr. Norton that married Sir J. Lawson's daughter is dead—she left £800 a year jointure, and son to inherit the whole estates. She freed from her father-in-law's tyranny ” (Mr. Norton senior died in 1666, according to Pepys's “ Diary ” of August 29) “ and is in a condition to help her mother, who needs it; of which I am glad, the young lady being very pretty.”

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over her brother Lord Arlington's engagement to Mademoiselle Beverwaert. This young lady, a sister of Lady Ossory's, was a daughter of Louis, Lord of Beverwaert, Count of Nassau, who was a natural son of Maurice, Prince of Orange. She was expected to arrive from Holland in January 1665-6, and was to be lodged with some ladies who lived near Canterbury, "who will think themselves honoured to lodge her, so she need lie in no tavern." Her arrival, however, was much delayed, as we find in April 1666 that she had not yet landed. Sir Thomas Clifford, writing to Lord Arlington, hopes for a safe passage for the lady "whose departure all Holland will regret more than anything except the loss of a battle."

For some reason or other the Earl of Arlington, when raised to the peerage, refused to take the title of Lord Bennet \*; "he will not have his own name to avoid any appearance of evil in his future lady, Lady Bennet being of too famous reputation in the world." He must have been alluding to a most disreputable woman of notorious reputation, whom Pepys styles "my Lady Bennett," evidently adopted as a cant expression—see p. 454, vol. 3, of the "Diary." She is described in the "Tatler" (No. 84) as "the celebrated Madame Bennet."

By June 19, 1666, the long-awaited bride had arrived, and Lord Arlington was congratulated on all sides "at this choice of a lady whose beauty and virtue make her so renowned." In September 1666 a bill was introduced in the House of Lords for the naturalizing of Lady Arlington. This was read in the House of Commons on October 6, "everyone striving to hasten it from respect to his Lordship," showing the high position and the amount of influence Lord Arlington possessed at the time.

\* Dawlay House near Hounslow, long the seat of the Bennet family, Harlington, in which parish it is situated, gave the title of Baron and Earl to Sir Henry Bennet, the aspirate being dropped. (Pepys's "Diary," Lord Braybrooke, vol. 2, p. 227.)



## CHAPTER III

## CUSTOMS AND EDUCATION

A gap of over two years occurs here in the letters. I take up 1669-70 the thread again in February 1669-70, when a letter from Richard Legh to his wife, written from London to Lyme on February 20, 1669-70, describes the satisfaction of Charles II at having secured from the nation a grant of £300,000 a year, for eight years, and the joy of the House of Commons at His Majesty's gracious speech (see "The House of Lyme," p. 242). Richard writes on February 26 of this same year, hoping for a prorogation in order to be able to get down to Lyme, where Elizabeth was anxiously awaiting him. Her family had by now, increased to four, three girls and the precious boy, Peter, born the previous October, 1669 :

"DEARE HEART,

"When I received my letters this night and saw not thy hand on the backside of any of them, I was troubled, but presently I found my error, and saw Tom Bowdon \* had directed them, then I was more troubled to find that poor Fanny † and the rest of my dear babes have been so vexed with colds. I know that my absence doth augment thy griefe, but I hope in God these will find them better, and by His permission I intend the week after this that comes in to see thee.

"My Father asked me today if I was not weary of the Towne? I told him were not he in it, I wold not stay 4 nights more in itt; but truly I hope this weeke will put the King's business and my owne into soe good order that I shall keepe my word with thee; but prithee keep it to thyselfe."

The condition of the London streets in the early years of Charles II's reign was by no means on a par with the luxury and magnificence of the houses. Dirt was the prevailing feature of

\* Agent or steward to Richard.

† Born June 1667, third daughter of Richard and Elizabeth.

## LYME LETTERS

the streets and squares. Rubbish was shot in the middle of Lincoln's Inn Fields, St. James's Square was just as bad, while the kennels and gutters ran with filthy water which the passing carts and hackney coaches splashed over the foot-passengers. There was no lighting in the streets. Robbers and cut-throats infested the lanes and thoroughfares, and made an easy prey of those who ventured out after dark. Young gallants amused themselves, while returning from a supper or masquerade, by knocking down inoffensive pedestrians and insulting women. In 1679,\* the poet Dryden was set upon in Covent Garden and severely beaten; this was suspected to have been done by order of the Duchess of Portsmouth, Dryden having, it was said, libelled her a short time before in a work entitled "An Essay upon Satyrs."

The senseless custom of duelling still prevailed, and the following description given by Richard to his wife of an attempted duel and of an incident which took place in the streets of London in February 1669-70 are typical examples of the life of the time :

"Upon Thursday Mun Ashton † of Chadderton went out of the Playhouse with young Digby and they fought but were prevented of doing each other any mischief by some that interposed. The night before a cousin German to Kirby's wife one Cooke, was drunke in Covent Garden, and coming home late, mett the Duke of Monmouth's Valet de Chambre who had his own wife by the hand leading her homewards. This Cooke would needs take her from him, and being rude with her, the woman gave him a box o'th ear. Cooke drew and prickt her ith' buttock; then the French Valet drew and att the first passe run Cooke into the right Papp, and he fell and has never spoken since. He cannot outlive two dayes. The Frenchman is fled though he needs not.

"Yesterday we read the Bill for the King's supply and upon Monday 'twill be read again; nobody opposeth it now. A strict Bill against Fanaticks is preparing. . . . I am in pain till I see thee, for this towne affords noe satisfaction to me in compare of thee and my deare bantlings.

"Thy entirely affectionate Husband

"R. LEGH.

"Sir Robert Carr ‡ and my Lady command me to say their service to you."

\* Lutterell.

† Probably a son of Edmund Ashton of Chadderton, who married in 1618 Dorothy, daughter of Robert Duckinfield of Duckinfield by Jane, daughter and co-heiress of Richard Holland of Denton. She was born 1602.

‡ See p. 31.



## CUSTOMS AND EDUCATION

In this same letter Richard gives the following account of what he terms "two sad passages" which are illuminating examples, the one of an irate husband seeking redress from a wife who has been "a great burthen and no advantage," the other of the attempted rescue of a Scotch peer, imprisoned for debt :

"Now I am a little at leisure, I can give you the accounts of 2 sad passages, the first concerned Sir Phil Howard,\* who married the widow you have heard me mention, whose daughter Sir John Chicheley and I went to visit in Kent : but now Sir Phil hath parted with her and she, like a cunning jilt, settled her estate before marriage, and hath been a great burthen upon Sir Phil and no advantage : he desiring to gett something, sent to the Mr of the Bear Garden to furnish him with 10 men that wold abide and give blows ; these men he sent to fell some woods in her Jointure, who being questioned by the Lady's servants, they dealt their blows soe freely that they killed 3 men upon ye spot and wounded more, all this with dry blows. But the men were brought before Justice and all of them are condemned, Sir Phil gave baile into ye Court being a Member of Pt or he had gone to ye condemn : too, but the King hath granted them their lives.

"The second tragedy is this : The Lord Hume, a Scotchman was layd into ye Fleet for debt. His friends surreptitiously (or as it is said Pretended) brought a Habeas Corpus to remove him ; the Warden of the Fleet's son, one Mr. Pierce, told my Lord he would be his guard and suspecting some treachery brought a Pistoll and charged itt before my Lord's face and putt a brace of bullets in ; As Pierce and my Lord, with a bailiff yt belonged to ye Fleet came in a Coach by Somersett House, there came two men with drawn swords yt stopt the coach and 2 came on each side the coach with pistolls and bid my Lord Hume come out, a deale more of my Lord's friends came cluttering about them ; then Lord Hume presents a pistoll to Mr. Pierce his brest which he put by, and itt fired without any prejudice. The gentlemen that came to rescue pulled my Lord out, and the bailiffe, seeing him goe out of ye coach, gott my Lord by the hair and pulled him back towards the coach, when Pierce fired his pistoll and shott my Lord through one side and both bullets lodged in his back, then Pierce outt of the coach and fought for his Prisoner ; they knocked him downe, but he up againe and run one of them through ; then they got Lord Hume into Somersett House and carried him to Whitehall where he found himself faint, and knew not he was shott, but ye next morning he dyed."

\* *Howard*, Sir Philip, elected member for Malmsbury Borough in February 1661-2. Was returned with Sir Christopher Musgrave for Carlisle City in the Parliament of 1678-9.

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Richard writes again on March 1, 1669 :

“ MY DEAREST,

“ Thy last hath given me a deale of satisfaction, for to hear of the good health of thee and thine is the happiest news I can receive, for which I doe heartily give God thanks.

“ This place affords noe content to me but that we goe on prosperously in the Parlt House, and yesterday Sir John Trevor \* acquainted the House from the King that he desired them to dispatch all publique businesse soe soone as possible, for att Easter he intended them to recesse and this day they are upon the King’s business.† A Bill likewise was brought in against Conventicles which I hope will doe their businesse. . . . I have been but at 2 Plays and thinke I shall never see another whilst I stay. I would not have thee write any more, for I hope to get out of Towne Tuesday or Wednesday next weeke. I promise thee I will not loiter after I putt foot in styruppe. My father was a joyed man when I told him yesterday that good news I received from thee. I prithee write to him, for he takes thy letters very kindly.

“ Dearest, Thine whilst

“ R. LEGH.”

He mentions a few weeks later, on April 3, an amusing incident relating to Sir John Crewe of Crewe,‡ who was supposed to have given offence to Charles II :

“ Jack Crewe of Utkinton § was yesterday dubbed at ye instance of Sir John Birkenhead. Ye King asked him what Crewe it was, ‘ Is it that Crewe that does like me ? ’ For you must know Jack Crewe of Crewe onct vyed with the King and said he would have ye finer Coach, for which he neer came into the presence since, as I have heard. But now it is Sir John Crewe of Utkinton.”

1670 The summer of 1670 was spent by Richard very happily at Lyme with his wife and “ dear babes,” Parliament having

\* *Trevor*, Sir John (1637–1717), Judge and Speaker of the House of Commons; knighted in 1671; Master of the Rolls, 1685; deprived of the Speakership for taking bribes in 1695.

† The King’s Supply.

‡ *Crewe of Crewe*, Sir John (1626–64), grandson of Sir Randolph Crewe of Crewe, married Carew, daughter of Sir Arthur Gorges of Chelsea. His grandfather, Sir Randolph Crewe, born in 1558, was Speaker of the House of Commons and Chief Justice of the King’s Bench in 1624–6. He built Crewe Hall.

§ *Crewe of Utkinton*, Sir John, Knight (1641–1734), eldest son of John Crewe (second son of Sir Randolph Crewe of Crewe) by his marriage with Mary Donne, heiress of Utkinton.



## CUSTOMS AND EDUCATION

been adjourned from April 11 to October 24. Local matters, in which he took the greatest interest, were occupying his attention, and both in Lancashire and Cheshire he found plenty to do, as he never spared himself and went personally into every detail of the management of his large estates. He was at this time much occupied with the nomination of a schoolmaster for Winwick School on his Lancashire property. It was thought that a clergyman would be most suitable, as he would then be able to undertake the duty at Newton Chapel close by,

“ye means whereof being so farr short to mayntain a minister, ye school and that together will be a handsome competency to a man of good parts.” \*

Winwick School, situated close to the church (the burial place of the Legh family for many generations), was founded as a public free school with an endowment of £10, before 1548, by an ancestor of Richard's, Gowther Legh. In 1618 Sir Peter Legh, Richard's grandfather, realizing that the school possessed no schoolhouse and that the endowment was too scanty, built the old brick house, part of which still exists (now all defaced by whitewash and cement), but no longer serving the same purpose. Sir Peter further augmented the endowment with another yearly sum of £10, which was increased by other donors to £34 per annum. There were also bread and other charities.

A tablet affixed to the house has the following inscription in black letters :

“This howse was built by Sir Peter Legh Knight upon his own charges in the yere of Our Lord, 1618, to be a school-hous for ever for the free school of Winwicke, founded by Gaulter Legh Esqr, Great Uncle of the said Sir Peter, which Gaulter gave ten pounds of yerely rent for the perpetual maintenance of the said school, and the said Sir Peter hath augmented the same with ten pounds per annum more, which he hath assured to be yearlye payde to the same free schoole for ever for his zeal to God's glorye and his love to the parish of Winwick and common good of the countrey.”

\* *Dr. Richard Sherlock*, M.A., Trinity College, Dublin (1612-89), Rector of Winwick, to Richard Legh, July 25, 1672. He was Chaplain to the Royalist Governor at Oxford and afterwards to the eighth Earl of Derby at Lathom. Published “*Mercurius Christianus*,” the “*Practical Christian*,” 1673, a treatise against Quakerism, and other works.

## LYME LETTERS

Winwick had had some good masters as well as scholars; Richard Mather,\* one of the New England pilgrim fathers, had been first a scholar and then a master of the school, which has sheltered many generations of Leghs, who acquired the rudiments of what knowledge they possessed within its walls. Here they have pored over their horn books, and with clumsy and unwieldy fingers have shaped their pot-hooks and hangers in the drowsy atmosphere of the "free school." Here, too, they acquired the first principles of rudimentary Latin, which they were to develop later at Oxford or Cambridge. In those days Latin was the common tongue of the learned, and boys were expected to converse together in Latin as girls now speak French at school. Writing was looked upon as a fine art, and dancing was considered to be of importance as giving a child an easy carriage.

It is awful to reflect upon the hideous cruelty that was practised in these schools, where savage floggings were of daily occurrence and can only have had a brutalizing effect on the poor little helpless victims. Knowledge was to be beaten into the child through his skull as well as through his ears. We read in Peacham's "Compleat Gentleman" that scholars were "pulled by the ears, lashed over the face, beaten about the head with the great end of the rod, smitten upon the lippes for every light offence with the Ferula"; the same authority asserting that the schoolmasters of the day believed that "ther is no other Method of making a Scholar than by beating him." The rod, apparently, was the only remedy for failure to understand or stupidity, as well as for idleness or naughtiness, and was often just a vent for the master's own ill humour. Mr. Peacham gives a further instance of a schoolmaster flogging his boys in order to warm himself:

"I knew one who in Winter would ordinarily in a cold morning whip his Boyes over for no other purpose than to get himself a heat."

Another kindly individual would beat his boys for swearing, "and all the time sweares himself with horrible oathes."

\* *Mather*, Richard (1596–1660), congregational divine, originally a schoolmaster; ordained minister at Toxteth, 1618; suspended in 1633 for not using ceremonies; emigrated to New England in 1635.



## CUSTOMS AND EDUCATION

But in spite of a higher civilization and more culture, it has only been of quite recent years that a more enlightened system of education has prevailed, and that the senseless and brutal flogging and bullying of former times have been abandoned.

To return to Winwick School. A letter addressed to Richard, in the form of a petition, with five signatures, headed by that of Doctor Richard Sherlock,\* the Rector of Winwick, proposes to Richard's "courteous acceptance the name of Will Dunbabin, Master of Arts to supply the school of Winwick now vacant by the death of Mr. Henry Mather, who is uppon our knowledge competently qualified for that employment." This is endorsed on the back in Richard's handwriting :

"I doe present Will Dunbabin, Mr of Arts to supply the vacancy att Winwick schoole and to receive the whole rents and profits belonging thereunto, soe long as he shall well discharge the place of Schoolmaster there : Given under my hand and seale

"att Lime, this 15th day of July An : Dom :

"1672." 1672

Apparently Mr. Dunbabin did not fulfil his duties to the satisfaction of the authorities, for the Rector, Dr. Richard Sherlock, writes to Richard, complaining of Dunbabin :

"HONRD SIR,

"Upon ye receipt of yrs touching ye schoole of Winwicke I con-  
ceyued it prudence to pause awhile before I returned you my answere.  
I acquainted Mr. Dunbabin with yor resolution to put in another,  
if by his future doubled diligence he recovered not ye schoole, wherein  
there was then but sixe scholars. Hee seemed to be well content to  
leave ye schoole, so yt hee might receyue ye Michells [Michaelmas]  
rent ensuing, which being so near, I conceyue it not imprudence to  
let him have them, so yt hee will peaceably surrender."

He then proceeds to recommend a certain James Boydell, the son of a carrier—a tenant of Richard's, Sherlock conceiving that Richard will prefer having the son of one of his tenants to a stranger :

"He is a young schollar of six years standing at Cambridge, and of a good report both for schollarship and civill conversation. But because of late young Schollars have proved so ill in yis [this] schoole, to prevent

\* Sherlock, Richard (see p. 39).

## LYME LETTERS

ye like, you may please to accept of this young Boydell, upon triall only for a quarter or two, and so continue or remove him as he proves serviceable for ye place or otherwise. This I conceyue to be ye most prudent course you can take in this affayre, wch I refer to yor own judicious consideration."

Ending with respects to Richard's Lady and "prayers for all."

The sequel to this appointment is illuminating, as illustrating the habits of the clergy and schoolmasters of the day. Apparently James Boydell, after his nomination, continued for some years to occupy the joint post of schoolmaster at Winwick School and curate at Newton Chapel. He must, however, have got into serious trouble, probably through intemperance, for he addresses a petition to Richard, "patron and benefactor to the free school of Winwicke" commemorating His Honour's worth and goodness in "passing by those weaknesses and Infirmities which are too incident to most young men in their youth, the notice whereof (yor petitioner doth confesse) might justly sooner have provoked yor Honour to lay on those reprimands under which yor Petitioner now stands." Protesting that to lie under Richard's censure were worse than death, that his petitioner "declares himself to be hartily sorry for the same, and promises to reform and be a New Man and not in the least ever hereafter bee seen Intemperate or in any loose company, but for the future diligently to apply himself to his charge and to the faithful teachinge and instructing and improofeing of his Schollers with the most elaborate care and paynes possible, and not in the least as to give occasion for any more Complaints of this Nature"; begging that his past errors may be forgiven and that he may be allowed to continue in his place. But Richard, very rightly, was obdurate, and James Boydell was removed, and we hear no more of him.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE BATTLE OF SOLE BAY

THE war clouds were gathering on the political horizon in 1671, 1671 and more trouble with the Dutch was anticipated. Charles feared the French quite as much; the fortifications were being looked to, and everything possible was being done to guard against any raid or surprise. On July 15, 1671, we find from the State Papers a warrant was issued to Sir Thomas Chicheley to deliver to one Captain Titus, 30 muskets and 40 cases of bandoleers for the defence of Deal Castle. "Two brass three-pounders with carriages, shot, and stores &ct thereto pertaining" were to be delivered to Charles Duke of Richmond for the defence of his house at Cobham, Kent. This was Charles, third Duke, the husband of "la belle Stuart," the famous Duchess of Richmond. Her miniature by Cooper is preserved at Lyme. It has inscribed on the back "Stuart the fine, Duchess of Richmond, from my Lady Saville's cabinet."

Windsor Castle, even, was supposed to be none too secure, and new fortifications were to be erected there. On September 13,\* comes an order from Charles II to Sir Thomas Chicheley, Master of the Ordnance :

"Having previously ordered for the safety of Windsor Castle new fortifications between the Keep and the lower Court, it is found necessary to pull down the house assigned to James Davies, Wardrobe Keeper; this is to be done at once, and an allowance of 20<sup>l</sup> a year passed to him in lieu thereof from the Ordnance Office during his life or continuance in office, and then to cease."

In September \* we find a request to the Navy Commissioners from a Captain Thomas Wilshaw for a further supply of sea victuals

\* S.P. Dom.

## LYME LETTERS

for the *Francis*, fireship, bound for the Straits, “ but now at the Nore pressing men for Sir John Chicheley ” just home from the Mediterranean. This was in preparation for the third Dutch war (the second of the Restoration), which broke out the following year, 1672.

In 1671 the arrival of Louis XIV at Dunkirk was supposed to have very much benefited the English markets. This town had been sold by Charles II to the French in 1662. It was of no value whatever, and by its abandonment Charles II saved an annual cost to the Crown of £120,000, which could have been spent on the army. But the loss of the town raised a storm of indignation mainly against Lord Clarendon, who was supposed, quite wrongly, to have benefited by the transaction. A letter from Thomas Cholmondeley \* of Vale Royal, Cheshire, written on April 21, 1672, to Richard's brother Thomas at Lyme, speaks of the arrival of the French King and of the benefits resulting therefrom :

“ The French King is now at Dunkirke, or will be in 3 dais ; he hath raised the Marketts here well, and in Suffolk the cheese, which is the worst in England, is come from 16s to 25s a hundred, and he will raise all provisions during his stay ; I hope the benefit will reach Lancashire and Cheshire, the only good the French ever did. I wish when they have sent for all the old store, they doe not come to the new, but yet I doe not hear of any Fleet they have at Sea, nor any we are like to have. The little Duke of Cambridge was this day removed from St James's to Richmond, in hope the Aire may doe him good, but I fear I shall never see him living again.”

This poor child, Edgar, Duke of Cambridge, fourth son by Anne Hyde, of the Duke of York, afterwards James II, died on June 8 of this same year, 1671, aged four years.

Infant mortality was terribly high, which is perhaps hardly surprising considering the nature of the remedies prescribed by the physicians of the day. A very delicate child had small chance of surviving, and it was only the robust constitutions that were able to withstand the bleeding, blistering and cupping,

\* *Cholmondeley*, Thomas, of Vale Royal, Cheshire (1627-1701-2), married first Jane Tollemache, who died in 1666, after the birth of her twelfth child. Thomas Cholmondeley married secondly in 1684, Anne, daughter of Sir Walter St. John of Battersea, by whom he had four sons and one daughter.



## THE BATTLE OF SOLE BAY

to say nothing of the nauseous black draughts, elixirs, powders and jollops that were poured down the poor little throats, with soothing syrups that as often as not soothed the child away altogether. In all probability many children would have recovered from their maladies had they been put to bed, kept warm and left to nature, instead of being tortured with the drastic remedies of the day. Queen Anne had seventeen children, many of whom ought to have lived; her last surviving child, the poor little Duke of Gloucester, would probably have got over the scarlet fever that killed him—or rather the remedies that were prescribed for him, had he only been left alone. The higher the rank of the child, the less chance he stood, owing to the attentions of the physicians, who shook their sapient heads and took their snuff over the little victim's sick bed.

Lady Carr, whom we have met with as a great friend of the Leghs, had a serious illness in 1671. Her husband, in a letter to Sir Joseph Williamson,\* reports that his wife “still holds out, but is in expectation every day to fall in pieces.” This lady had a rather pretty wit, and, in spite of her serious condition, sends a humorous message to Sir Joseph to say that she doubts not of his good wishes for her health, “but has too much respect not to enjoin you to pray for her, knowing that must be troublesome *to those that do it seldom*.”

A later letter from Sir Robert Carr invites Sir Joseph to pay them a visit at Sleaford, and contains a special message from Lady Carr, with the information that the house is provided with a back door, which she thinks will be an inducement to Sir Joseph to visit them as “ministers delight in private passages.” She writes on December 18, 1671, reporting that Sir Robert had been very ill “with something of a fever, succeeded by a fit of the spleen, and kept his chamber a fortnight.” She begs that Sir Joseph will send her a “book of Almanacks, that I may know how the year goeth about.” She apologises also for not writing, having so much on her hands “especially at this time of the year,

\* Williamson, Sir Joseph (1633–1701), statesman and diplomatist, knighted and appointed Clerk of the Council in Ordinary in 1672; Secretary of State in 1674; fell a victim to the suspicions aroused by the “Popish Plot,” and was removed from office in 1678.

## LYME LETTERS

when there are such employments as Bartholomew Fair to be attended."

1672      Meantime the war with the Dutch had broken out in March 1672 without any actual declaration of war. The French attempted an invasion of Holland, and were so far successful that the Prince of Orange only checked the progress of Louis XIV's troops by opening the dykes and flooding the whole country. The rapid success of the French arms so alarmed Charles II that he sent the Duke of Buckingham, accompanied by Lord Arlington, to The Hague in June 1672, in order to persuade the Prince of Orange to accept the terms of the Allies. The Prince, however, refused, and the two Kings of England and France thereupon renewed their engagements of the treaties of 1669 and 1670 for a joint war with Holland.

On the outbreak of the war, Sir John Chicheley was appointed to the *Royal Katharine*, a 2nd-rater of 76 guns and 520 men in the Blue Squadron. The progress of the war in 1673 and the part Sir John took in it I have fully described in "The House of Lyme," but further researches have revealed to me the fact that Sir John had participated in the battle of Sole Bay the previous year, 1672, and that he had been taken prisoner by the Dutch. The particulars of this adventure I proceed to give for the first time.

The fight "which was very hot" \* was begun about 7 a.m. on May 28, 1672, in a small gale, by the Blue Squadron, commanded by the Earl of Sandwich,† about four leagues off Aldeburgh in Suffolk, the Dutch fleet standing in for Sole Bay. Accounts vary as to whether the French or the English fleet were the first to engage, but it seems probable that the Earl of Sandwich, Admiral of the Blue Squadron, led the attack in the *Royal James*, practically unsupported. The Dutch bore down upon her "like a torrent," \* and the gallant Earl of Sandwich was killed almost immediately by a small shot and his ship totally destroyed "by a pitiful fire-ship," \* but not before he

\* S.P. Dom.

† *Sandwich*, Edward Montagu, first Earl (1625-72), Admiral and general at sea; second in command of the English fleet on the outbreak of the Dutch war in 1672; blown up with his ship in Sole Bay, 1672.



## THE BATTLE OF SOLE BAY

had fired many broadsides and had sunk a great Dutch ship and three fire-ships “and let the whole squadron taste of his valour.” The French, who bore with the Blue Squadron the whole brunt of the battle, behaved with great gallantry.

The *Royal Katharine*, commanded by Sir John Chicheley, was, it appears, newly commissioned and “wanting many conveniences necessary for defence,” \* had besides a crew composed of wholly undisciplined and untrained men. We learn from the State Papers that she was being provisioned on May 15, her peas and water-casks being shipped. There was great negligence displayed by all the officials, the water-casks being left empty to rot in the sun, and therefore leaking when they were filled for use. The greatest difficulty, however, was getting men to man the ship. In spite of the press-gang, it was almost impossible to obtain men of the right type. The full complement for the *Royal Katharine* was to have been 520, but 117 were all that could be mustered on May 20, and out of these 32 had to be rejected, being “poor country fellows not very proper for that service.”

Another difficulty was how to get them on board, for the Dutch were in the river; the men were to be shipped on three small wherries, “which might creep up between the sands.” By the 21st May another 240 were despatched to the *Royal Katharine* by order of Prince Rupert, with whom Sir John Chicheley was a great favourite. It was a case of “robbing Peter to pay Paul,” for the men were taken from the *Revenge*, whose captain writes to the Navy Commissioners bitterly complaining of his “sad and naked condition, having by Prince Rupert’s orders delivered all his men to the number of 240 on board the *Royal Katharine* and his pilot besides.” † Even so, her numbers were far short of the complement, being—as far as we can make out—325 instead of 520. Four hundred were expected from Yarmouth, but these did not turn up in time. Besides these drawbacks, the men taken from the *Revenge* much resented their transfer and became mutinous.

In this unsatisfactory condition the *Royal Katharine* put

\* “The Savile Correspondence.”

† S. P. Dom.

## LYME LETTERS

out to sea on May 21, accompanied by the *Princess*, the *Advice*, the *Revenge*, and three fire-ships. Fire-ships were old vessels filled with combustible materials, which in olden times were sent amongst the enemy's ships and attached to them, so as to set them on fire.

In the fight that ensued, the Dutch succeeded in boarding the *Royal Katharine*, which is scarcely surprising, considering her condition and the quality of her crew. For three hours the ship remained in possession of the enemy, who imprisoned all the English seamen under hatches below, Sir John Chicheley with his lieutenant being forced on board the enemy.

By a clever ruse the imprisoned men saved their ship and themselves. The boatswain and gunner, "the only two officers left who animated their men by cheering them 'For God and King Charles'" while they were below, raised a cry "The ship sinks!" which so alarmed the Dutch that they liberated the men in order that they might help to save the ship. The Englishmen then succeeded in overpowering their Dutch aggressors, and were enabled not only to save their ship but even to navigate her safely into harbour, carrying with them also many prisoners. A Scotch spy amongst the Dutch sailors was caught with a match in his hand with which he intended to blow up the ship. He was sent ashore "for the better securing of him, till I receive commands what to do with him." \*

Sir John Chicheley and his lieutenant were meantime taken to Rotterdam and very harshly treated, being thrown into the common prison. There they remained for over a fortnight, being finally liberated on June 13 through the instrumentality of one Robert Custis (or Curtis), who wrote from Rotterdam to the Commissioners for the Sick and Wounded in London, to say that the Dutch Lords of the Admiralty had agreed to release Sir John Chicheley on Custis giving his bond, but that they had refused to accept that of a certain Nicholas Reeve.

The official account of the battle of Sole Bay, which ended in favour of the English and French, the Dutch being driven back to their coast, declares that "the Dutch never had such

\* S.P. Dom.



## THE BATTLE OF SOLE BAY

a destruction of ships and men ever known, being scattered, many of their ships sunk and fired." \* The report on the condition of the *Royal Katharine* was "such a spectacle for damage of masts, yards and rigging as I never yet saw so bad."

It is interesting to note the terms for the exchange of prisoners, and to compare these and the conciliatory tone adopted by the Dutch, with those of the Germans regarding our own prisoners in the recent war.

"Robert Custis (or Curtis) to the Commissioners for the Sick and Wounded. Rotterdam, June 8/18.\*

"I delivered these Articles 13 June (N.S.) to the Lords of the Admiralty [of Holland] concerning the prisoners taken in English ships : 1. That all prisoners might be exchanged man for man of like quality, or that their Lordshipps would state on what terms they would release them ?

"Answer

"That they would agree to any reasonable way, when I had received full instructions from the Commissioners.

2. "That the prisoners might have good usage, and that they would appoint one to go with me to the prison to see how they were used, and that any Englishman might have liberty to visit them, and that any procuring bail, till exchanged or released might be set at liberty.

"Granted.

3. "That all boys now in prison be released free of charges, as in the last war, and none hereafter sent to prison, I promising that the like be done to their prisoners in England.

"Granted.

"I have just promised to give my bond for Sir John Chicheley's release, as the Lords would not accept that of Nicholas Reeve, and he is out."

On July 17 Silas Taylor writes to Sir Joseph Williamson as follows :

"Capt Anguish brought Sir John Chicheley from the Briell to the fleet, where he is, and speaks of Mr. Reeve refusing to let him take the English released prisoners on his ketch to the fleet, saying His Majesty ordered him to send them in hired Dutch vessels, not in English, but the supposition by all is private interest."

\* S.P. Dom.

## CHAPTER V

### CHARLES II AND HIS PARLIAMENT

1673 By the following year, 1673, the war broke out again. There were the usual differences between Charles II and the Parliament about granting the money required to carry on the war. Charles was always suspected of misappropriating the money granted to him and of spending it either on his own amusements, or on the numerous worthless individuals, male and female, who frequented his Court. But although he may have been, and no doubt was, dissolute, to describe him as most historians do, as a selfish voluptuary who lived only for pleasure and who thought nothing of his country, is as incorrect as it is unjust.\* Halifax, the author of the best description and character of Charles II, maintains that God had made him of a particular composition, that the vicissitudes of his fortune may be held in part accountable for some of his weaknesses, for his dissimulation, and perhaps in some measure for his immorality. Good-natured, *débonnaire*, easy of access, grateful to those who had rendered him personal service in misfortune, kind of heart and generous of disposition, an excellent raconteur, his ready sense of humour and wit made him a delightful companion. His faults were on the surface. Idle, selfish, hating trouble or business, he was all these, while the passion in him which swallowed every other was his love for women, and this only ended with his life.

He never received the money promised him. Parliament, it is true, voted great sums, but these never reached the amounts voted, nor did the size of the vote correspond with the importance of the undertaking for which it was appropriated. Charles was hampered all his life by want of means. Of the revenue

\* " Dictionary of National Biography."



## CHARLES II AND PARLIAMENT

allotted to him, £1,200,000 per annum, only £950,000 found its way into his treasury, and, out of this, according to the Duke of York and other authorities, £800,000 was devoted to raising the fleet and keeping it efficient. In spite, therefore, of an allowance on paper of £1,200,000 a year, and some £270,000 derived from excise and other duties and taxes, Charles never received more than a yearly average of £572,000, and this with a great naval war in progress.

\* Who can blame him for having taken money from France to apply to the uses and necessities for which his own government funds were totally inadequate? This was not selling his country, as he is often accused of having done. On the contrary, it was owing to the subsidies from Louis XIV that Charles was enabled to carry on the war with Holland which gave to England the sovereignty of the seas, and the nucleus of her magnificent colonial Empire, while the alliance with France gave her security and peace during the period when war raged over the whole Continent.

In a letter from Richard Legh written from London on February 8, 1672-3, to his brother Thomas at Lyme, he gives an account of the happenings and stormy scenes in the House of Commons, the Parliament insisting on the King withdrawing or altering his Declaration of Indulgence before any money could be voted for carrying on the war :

“ Feb. 8, 1672-3.

“ DEAR BRO:

“ In my last to Cos: Warren, I told you how angry the House was : Now I thanke God, things looke with a better face, for yesterday after Secretary Coventry † had told us in a very honest and plain Speech the whole affaire of our last Dutch warr, and the necessity of this, and that the Dutch had never sent anyone to treat for a peace but such kind of persons as are now in the Tower (which I formerly told you of) and then did make itt appear how maliciously they designed our ruine by endeavouring allies with the French or any they could gaine to be against us, and how falsely they had delt with him and more of our Embassadors which our King sent for to gaine a peace with them. In fine he humbly left it to the serious consideration of that house, since

\* “ A misjudged Monarch ” (Imbert Terry).

† *Coventry*, Sir William (1628?-86), youngest son of the Lord Keeper, secretary to the Duke of York, 1660-67, friend of Pepys.

## LYME LETTERS

the first war was of themselves, and this had yet cost them nothing, they would unanimously give him their assistance."

Reporting also with joy the unanimous voting of £1,200,000 to the King. A short account of the proceedings is given in a MS. preserved at Lyme :

"MR VAUGHAN.\*

"If Monarchs were as lasting as their Kingdoms we were safe, but he mou'd that we might vote the Illegality of the Declaration.

"SR ROB: HOWARD : †

"Urg'd that neither Life, Liberty nor Estate w<sup>ch</sup> is each mans Property was infringed by itt.

"SR WM COUENTRY : ‡

"mou'd the same vote w<sup>ch</sup> passed against the Declaration sent from Breda might now be w<sup>ch</sup> was

"The vote

"That the Laws for Uniformity of the Church of England and all Penall Laws cannot be suspended but by Act of Parliament : and this vote did passe on Monday ye 10th of Feb. 1672-3.

"SR THOMAS LEIGH

"Said the K: had been misinform'd by his Councell and desir'd the house would aduise him right

"Sr Heneage Finch § the Attorn: Gen: then stood up and declared the K: Councell att Law knew nothing of that Declaration untill itt was forth :

"COLL: STRANGUAIES

"Then mou'd the Lrd Keep: Bridg: || might be called in Question for certainly he knew, but that went no further.

"After we had sate till 5 a clock in the afternoon itt was putt to ye Quest: ye vote aboue s<sup>d</sup> wch passed in ye affirmatiue, ye Eyes that staid in were 168 and ye Noes that went out were 116: Then a Committee were nam'd to prepare an Humble Petition and Adresse to his Maty, that he wold graciously be pleased to withdraw his Declaration."

\* *Vaughan*, possibly Sir John (1603-74), judge; a leader of the country party; active in the impeachment of Clarendon.

† *Howard*, Sir Robert (1626-98), dramatist; Whig M.P. for Stockbridge in 1660, and Castle Rising in 1679-98; published historical works and poems.

‡ *Coventry*, Sir William (see p. 51).

§ *Finch*, Heneage, first Earl of Nottingham (1621-82), Lord Chancellor; a zealous and able supporter of the Court policy, but independent as a judge.

|| *Bridgeman*, Sir Orlando (1606?-74), Lord Keeper; M.P. for Wigan in the Long Parliament, and knighted 1640; presided at the trial of the regicides; Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas, 1660-8, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, 1667-72.



# CHARLES II AND PARLIAMENT

On February 11, 1672-3, Richard reports to Thomas Legh that

“The King is very angry att our yesterday’s vote, but I know not we cold do lesse for our Church.”

A letter to Richard from Edward Warren \* of Poynton—a neighbour and dear friend—although an old man and living buried entirely in the country, gives a very clever and sensible suggestion for getting over the difficulty :

“As to what the King hath so positively saide for his Declaration of Indulgence and what you have since voted against it are things so contrary that I can see no medium to avoid a breach, (which were the worst of ills) but that you putt the Indulgence into an Act of Parliament, and the best thing you can doo in that is to make this Act temporary and but for a short tyme, so that if it prove mischievous, (as it is to be feared it will) that tyme will putt an end unto itt and it may bury itself.”

On February 15, Richard writes to his brother again, from London, mentioning the proposal made in the House for a bill to be brought in giving indulgence to Dissenters, which provoked some indignation from the Roman Catholics :

“Yesterday the House was somewhat warme ; they ordered the House with the Speaker to attend the King with that address I mentioned in my last to Cos: Warren ; and that a Bill should be brought in to give some indulgence to his Majesty’s subjects dissenters from the Church of England. The heat was also occasioned by some persons that moved in behalf of the Roman Catholics that had faithfully served the King in the late Warrs, but they are not to partake in this intended Act, nor would the House suffer the Lords to be desired to go along with them, which to me appears the worst of anything done yet, for our addresse is single at present, and we cannot passe itt into an Act without the Lords, and truly I know not how we can word that Act.”

On February 24, 1672-3, the House of Commons voted :

“That ye thanks of this House be returned to His Majesty for his gracious assurances and promises in his answer to ye addresse presented him by this House.

“25th. A Committee appointed to forme ye Thanks.”

\* Born 1605. Called “Stag Warren” from his great size and strength ; a near neighbour and life-long friend of Richard Legh.

## LYME LETTERS

1672-3

“The thanks,” which appear in a paper in the handwriting of Richard, also take the form of a petition, for while returning His majesty most dutiful thanks for “those gracious promises and assurances so often made” of maintaining the religion now established, yet

“upon serious consideration thereof, we find yt your said answer is not sufficient to clear the apprehensions that may justly remaine in the minds of yr people by your Majestie having claimed a power to suspend penal laws in matters Ecclesiastical and which your Majesty doth still seeme to assert in yr said answer to be intrusted in ye Crowne and never questioned in ye reign of any of yr Ancestors, wherein we conceive yr Majesty hath been very much misinformed, since noe such power was ever claimed or exercised by any of your Majesty's Predecessors. . . . We doe therefore with an unanimous consent, become againe most humble suitors to yr sacred Majesty, and that you would be pleased to give us a full and satisfactory answer to our said Petition and Address.”

Very indignant, Charles consulted the House of Lords in a speech \* which he made there on March 1, before replying to his faithful Commons :

“MY LORDS,

“You know att the opening of this present Sessions of Parliament, I spake here to yr satisfactions; it hath Notwithstanding begotten greater disquiett to the House of Commons than I could have Imagined; I received an Adresse from them that I looked not for, and I made them an answer that ought to have Contented them, but on the Contrary, they have made me a Reply of such a nature that I cannot think to proceed in the matter without your Advice.

“I have Commanded the Chancellor to acquaint you with all the transactions, wherein you will finde both mee and yrselves most high Concerned. I am sensible for what relates to myself, and I assure you, my Lords, I am not lesse for the Priviledges and honour of yr House.”

The answer the House of Lords gave the King was by a vote to this effect :

“That the King's answer to the Howse of Commons in referring the Points now in Controversie to a Parliamentary way by Bill is good and gracious, that being a proper and Natural Course for satisfaction therein.”

\* Legh MSS.



# CHARLES II AND PARLIAMENT

A letter from Richard to his brother Thomas at Lyme, written 1673 from London on March 1, gives an account of the proceedings in the House of Commons, and reveals the pressure that was being brought to bear on the King with relation to the following questions. That all Papists were to be dismissed from the navy and army, and all such persons occupying positions of great trust and profit, and all Jesuit priests to be expelled the kingdom with the exception of those in attendance on the Queen.

The Parliament used the money bill as a lever to obtain what they wanted from the King, fully realizing the dire straits Charles was always in for want of money; in fact, they saw that he did not know which way to turn for funds to enable him to live at all, far less to carry on a great naval war.

“DEAR BROTHER,” writes Richard,

“Since my last we have done little but showed great signs of anger. . . . The old damned Presbyter: rides us most vigorously, God deliver us from the fate of 1641. These days look too like them.”

A second petition was forwarded to the King, bearing date March 3, praying for the expulsion of all Jesuits other than the priests attending the Queen, and the dismissal of all Papists from military commands and employments of trust and profit. Charles's answer, made in a speech in the House of Lords, a manuscript copy of which is preserved at Lyme, was in the main a gentle reminder of his long over-due Supply :

“MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“Yesterday you presented me an adresse as the best means for the satisfying and composing ye minds of my Subjects to which I freely and readily agreed, and shall take care to see it perform'd accordingly. I hope on the other side you gentlemen of the House of Commons will doe yr part, for I must put you in mind itt is neere 5 weeks since I demanded a supply, and what you voted unanimously upon itt did both give life to my affairs at home and disheartened my enemies abroad, but ye seeming delay itt hath mett with since, hath made them take new Courage, and they are now preparing for this next summer a greater Fleet, as they say, than ever they had yett, and soe that if the Supply be not speedily dispatch't, itt will be altogether ineffectuall, And ye Safety, Honor and Interest of England must of necessity be exposed; Pray lay this to hart and let not ye feares and Jelouzies of some draw an inevitable ruine upon us all.

## LYME LETTERS

“ My Lords and Gentlemen, If there be any scruple remaining yett wth you concerning the Suspension of Penall Lawes, I heere fully promise you, That what hath been done in yt particular, shall not for ye future be drawne into Consequence or Example: And as I dayly expect from you a Bill for my Supply, so I assure you I shall as willingly receive and pass any other you shall offer me, that may tend to ye giuing you satisfaction in all your just greeuances.”

This was followed by an expression of “ humble and harty thanks ” from the House of Commons to the King for his full and satisfactory answer given to their humble petition, and the House thereupon resolved itself into a Grand Committee for the bill for the King’s Supply.

Great reticence had been displayed about Sir John Chicheley’s capture and subsequent imprisonment. The incident is not once mentioned in any of the Legh letters. So far, however, from its having been thought disgraceful or militating against him in any way, he was, soon after his release, promoted to be Rear-Admiral of the Red, and he hoisted his flag on the *Royal Charles*, 82 guns.

In the battle of Texel,\* through the inactivity of the French, the Dutch were enabled to double on the Red Squadron and separate it. For a time Sir John Chicheley was in much danger of being overpowered. He fought with the greatest gallantry, and, seconded by Captain Wetwang† in the *Warspite*, was ultimately rescued from his perilous position by the spirited exertions of Prince Rupert. The Prince gives the following account of the engagement.

“ On Monday 11th August ‡ at daybreak we saw the Dutch fleet about 1½ leagues to windward. . . . The Dutch bore down upon us. . . . At that time I saw Sir John Chicheley, Rear Admiral of the Red to leeward of me a great way. The whole force of De Ruyter’s and Bankaert’s squadrons lay upon my division, and Sir John Harman’s, § and the enemy had cut off Sir John Chicheley and his division from me,

\* S.P. Dom.

† *Wetwang*, Sir John (died 1684); captain in the navy; commanded the King’s ship in the wars against the Dutch, 1665–74; died in India.

‡ S.P. Dom.

§ *Harman*, Sir John (died 1673), admiral; knighted 1665; rear-admiral, 1665; prominent in the four days fight off North Foreland, 1666.



# CHARLES II AND PARLIAMENT

so that about 12, I had upon me De Ruyter and his squadron on my lee quarter, an admiral and 2 flags more on my weather quarter, and the Zealand squadron on my broadside to windward. Having fought thus some time with both my broadsides to windward and to leeward I edged down towards the Rear-Admiral of the Red, forcing the enemy to give way, and so foiled them."

At the end of a long despatch he says :

"In this battle neither French nor English lost one ship of war nor do I think the Dutch have great reason to rejoice, and, considering all things, I think it the greatest providence that ever befell me in my life, that I brought off the fleet so."

Another account of the engagement says :

". . . Sir John Chicheley was forced out of the line by some damage he received, and was followed by a Dutch Admiral and 9 other ships. . . . At which time the General \* bore down for the rescue of Sir John Chicheley, and to see what condition the Blue Squadron were in, so the Dutch and English came down within half shot and did not fire. About 6 De Ruyter, bearing down, thinking to destroy the disabled *Royal Prince*, and coming a great way ahead of his own fleet, was bravely hindered of his design by Lord Ossory, who clapped between the *Royal Prince* and De Ruyter. At which time some of the Red Squadron were endangered, being in the crowd of the enemy, so that the General was forced to send fireships for their relief, which using their best endeavours by setting their ships on fire, made the enemy give way, and the General, bearing down to get his fleet together, the Dutch lay by, and so we parted for the night."

Prince Rupert gave great praise to Sir Thomas Chicheley for the efficient manner in which he carried out his duties as Master of the Ordnance :

"Early in the morning came up with the fleet, Mr. Moore, and the ammunition ships, with very great satisfaction to Prince Rupert, not one thing being forgotten, for which he extremely applauds the care and punctuality of the Master of the Ordnance."

Sir John Chicheley finally retired from the service in 1675, and was then appointed Commissioner of the Navy. He also filled other posts, including that of Master of the Ordnance, in succession to his father, on the retirement of Sir Thomas. The favour in which Sir John Chicheley stood with different govern-

\* Prince Rupert.

## LYME LETTERS

ments and the high opinion entertained of his conduct as a good officer and an honest man, is to be inferred from the posts he occupied and the trust that was reposed in him. In his "Biographia Navalis" Charnock\* speaks of him with the greatest enthusiasm as "having been bred to the service to which he had rendered himself an ornament."

\* *Charnock*, John (1756-1807), author; a friendship which he contracted with Captain Locker, the correspondent of Nelson and Lieut.-Governor of Greenwich Hospital, led to the publication of his "Biographia Navalis" (6 vols., 8vo, 1794-8) or "Impartial Memoirs of the Lives and Characters of Officers of the Navy of Great Britain from the year 1660."



## CHAPTER VI

### PUBLIC LIFE AND ITS PERILS

“How happy certainly are wee (Good Cosen) that in this stormy 1674 weather and world, can under the shelter of these hills lye snug and unconcerned !”

THUS wrote Roger Downes to Richard Legh in the early autumn of 1674, from Worth (now called Shrigley), his place about three miles distant from Lyme.

This was the attitude of the country gentlemen of the day. Their happiness lay with their interests, and these were in their country homes. Affairs of State, in which they could only play a small and insignificant part, had no charms for them. Political life was fraught with danger. Every man's hand was against his neighbour. Suspicion and distrust dogged the footsteps of all public men. Spies and informers were their daily, hourly attendants, lurking in their palaces and participating in feast and banquet. A hasty and incautious word or jest, spoken perhaps in a moment of excitement or after the pledging of too many toasts, was liable, years after, to be brought up and used against the poor unconscious offender, whereas the real culprit—as often as not—went scot free. It was the age of impeachments. Sooner or later every public man was attacked, rightly or wrongfully, and in many cases his guilt was established.

As an illustration, I may cite a circular letter sent by Secretary Coventry to Edward Dunvill, Sir Robert Leicester, Mr. Towneley of Boyle, Mr. Woodman of Plyford, Mr. Henry Bradshawe and Mr. Thomas Lee (*sic*) of Lyme and Mr. Legh of Bootes, informing them all that the King had been told of certain dangerous words lately spoken in their presence, not only against his Government and the Duke of York, but against His Majesty himself, and summoning these gentlemen to attend at Lancaster

## LYME LETTERS

on a particular date in order to be examined before Sir Thomas Stringer, one of the Justices of Oyer and Terminer for Lancashire, His Majesty adding that he was loth to bring them all up to London, but intimating, nevertheless, that the affair was a serious one. Happily they were all able to clear themselves and no more was heard of the matter. (S.P. Dom.)

1674-5 Henry, Earl of Arlington \* was also a victim early in 1674-5, being unsuccessfully impeached for high treason in the House of Commons, and for being—it was alleged—"the instrument of the King's evil measures." A MS. paper at Lyme in Richard's handwriting gives a list of the crimes Lord Arlington was accused of. Amongst others that he was a consistent and most vehement promoter of Popery, procuring commissions and pensions for Papists and Popish officers in other men's names and admitting them to positions of trust, military and other, contrary to the established laws and constitution of the realm. A notable instance was that of Colonel Fitzpatrick, a notorious Irish rebel, accused by the then Lord Lieutenant of high crimes, for whom Lord Arlington was supposed to have obtained a grant of £2000, charged upon the Revenue of Ireland. Colonel Fitzpatrick's mother was said to have been hanged in the late wars for murdering several English and making candles of their fat.† (Legh MSS.)

Another accusation against Lord Arlington was that he had maintained a more than usual intimacy with the French Ambassador, letting him into the King's most secret councils. Furthermore, that

"when the French Fleet were dispersed after the late Fight at Sea, and had lost all their anchors by reason of the foul weather that then ensued, he persuaded His Majesty to send them 180 cables and anchors although it was then objected, and he knew it to be true, that His Majesty had not at the present time any more in his Stores to supply his owne Ships in case of like necessity."

\* *Arlington*, Earl of (see p. 20).

† There was probably as much truth in this story as there was in the lurid and fantastic tale of the Germans in the Great War boiling the corpses of their dead to convert them into glycerine for high explosives.





RICHARD LEGH OF LYME

*From a Painting at Lyme by Sir Peter Lely*





# PUBLIC LIFE AND ITS PERILS

Also that

“he hath traiterously corresponded with the King’s Enemies beyond the Seas, and contrary to the trust reposed in him, given Intelligence to them.”

After long debates upon the Articles, the Question being put :

“That an Address be presented to His Majesty for removing the Earl of Arlington from all his Employments and from His Majesty’s presence for ever,”

it passed in the negative, 166 to 127. Protected by the King, it was a case of being kicked upstairs, for although Lord Arlington lost his post, he was given that of Lord Chamberlain instead.

Richard makes no comment on the ill-fortune of his friend Lord Arlington. It was dangerous to express any views, and the greatest caution had always to be observed, for letters were constantly opened in the post and the contents used against the writers. Even in his letters to his wife Richard occasionally employed a cipher, to which, unfortunately, I have found no key.

The war was still raging abroad. In the spring of 1673–4 the tide began to turn in favour of the Dutch,\* and Holland was saved for the time being by William’s dauntless resolve who invariably profited more by defeat than other commanders did by victory. A letter dated October 20, 1674, written to Lyme, reports the surrender of Grave, one of the strongholds of the Low Countries, to the Prince of Orange :

“There was neere 300 English lost in the attack the night before ’twas yielded, soe the poore English goe on both sides and everywhere goe to pot, but have got eternal renowne.”

The King was approached in the matter of recalling all his British subjects out of the French army, although it was supposed that this would “breed bad blood unless we had voted the same for Holland.” On May 8 Charles sent an answer to the address for recalling his subjects by Secretary Coventry,† to the intent that

“there was but a few and those were established at the time he concluded the Peace with Holland, and desired he might not entrench

\* Green.

† Coventry, Sir William (see p. 51).

## LYME LETTERS

upon that, and for the future he promised his Proclamation should come out that noe more should goe."

"This would not goe down," comments Richard, "without further consideration, soe 'twas deferred till Monday the consideration thereof. As yet there is nothing done for either King or country."

Although the actual impeachment of the Lord Treasurer Danby \* did not take place before 1678, there were attacks being made upon him in the House of Commons and, led by Shaftesbury,† in the House of Lords as early as 1675. Himself unscrupulous and unprincipled, Danby counted on finding others the same, and he was supposed to set aside from the Excise a yearly sum of £20,000 for the purpose of bribing Members of Parliament. In foreign affairs he was at heart friendly to the Dutch, and opposed to France, but his subsequent conduct showed that he was willing to retain office at the price of acting as Charles's agent in negotiations with Louis XIV. The following extracts from letters, written from London to Lyme in April and May 1675, give some interesting particulars of what was going on at the time.

"April 20, 1675.

"This day Sir John Pretymen petitioned the House that he was in durance taken in Prorogation time upon an Execution. The Lawyers produced several cases that he ought not to be released, notwithstanding they voted it, 141 for sending the Sergeant for him, and 67 were against it."

"April 27: . . . The Lord Mayor of London,‡ upon a suite in Chancery for his rich daughter-in-law, is proved to be the basest unworthy man that lives. The Treasurer not free as you will find."

"May 1 . . . Yesterday we sate till 5 a'clock and rejected the 2d Article against the Lord Treasurer. In the morning we had the Lord Mayor and some of the Aldermen of Canterbury on their knees at our Barr. Their crime was for putting out their Recorder when he was chose a Member of our House. In the afternoon we had the Lord Mayor of London, who was produced to witness the 2d Article

\* *Osborne*, Sir Thomas, successively first Earl of Danby, Marquis of Carmarthen and Duke of Leeds (1631-1712), statesman.

† *Cooper*, Anthony Ashley, first Earl of Shaftesbury (1621-83), attached himself to the Parliamentarians, but was pardoned at the Restoration.

‡ Probably Sir Robert Viner, who was Lord Mayor in 1674, the election taking place in November.



## PUBLIC LIFE AND ITS PERILS

against the Lord Treasurer. The House divided upon the Question whether he should have a Chaire or noe (14 were for it, 137 for none). The Evidence was not great, soe that Article was thrown out. This day was the only day we rested (except Sundays) since I came."

"May 4th. . . . The Lord Treasurer's Articles are now passed our House and all damned, not one of them found weighty enough for an Impeachment to the great shame of the Impeachers. This day the House orders a Bill to be brought in to affix the Customs solely to the building of Shipps for this 3 years to come, and yesternight I have spoken with some belonging to the Court, who have undertaken to set up our Fishing Trade again, and have for that purpose sent for 1200 families out of Holland.

"May 6th. . . . The Lord Treasurer came well off, but when the King's business \* came to be mentioned, the old Divell appeared in a Presbyterian likeness. God knows the event of this Session. This day the Scotch Dr. Burnet's † words were tryed and after 2 hours debate, adjourned till the next weeke, but another Vote passed to second the former Adresse to the King to desire him to issue out his Proclamation to recall his Subjects now in the French service."

"May 8th. . . . The Lords are still very high about their Privileges, ‡ and now we have a new quarrell betwixt a Member of our's (one Sir John Fagg §) who was summoned to their Barr upon a Suite and the two Houses are to have Conferences. This is a brave Bone cast betwixt the two Houses at this critical time. In short the Papists and Presbyterians join heartily against the Church of England."

In despair at the hopelessness of the situation, and with no prospect of getting his Supply, Charles prorogued the Parliament for fifteen months, and, in order, no doubt, to put a stop to political criticism, the coffee-houses, which were beginning to take the place of modern clubs, were peremptorily closed.

\* The money bill.

† *Gilbert Burnet*, Bishop of Salisbury (1673-1715); incurred the hatred of Lauderdale; remonstrated with Charles II on his profligacy; in consequence, was dismissed by the King from his chaplaincy; author of the "History of his own Times."

‡ Richard Legh to Thomas Legh.

§ *Fagg*, Sir John, a Parliamentary colonel; M.P. for Steyning; created a baronet in 1660; died 1701.

## CHAPTER VII

### PRIVATE LIFE AND ITS PLEASURES

1673-4 AMONGST Elizabeth Legh's letters, preserved at Lyme, is one from her uncle, Sir Henry Chicheley, brother of Sir Thomas, written on February 16, 1673-4, from Virginia, where he occupied the post of Governor, acknowledging a present from Elizabeth of some "hares wool cloth" for his wife:

"DEARE NEECE,

"I had the good fortune (for all the dangers of the Seas) to receive the hares wool cloth for a petticoate for my wife, for which I returne you many thanks, and had not the ship come in so late that all tobaccos had bin in last, I had returned you what you desire in tobacco, but this yeare I'm not soe good as my word; the next shall not fayle to send you a Parcell sorted out for your Husband. For news I suppose you expect none from this barren part of the World, and for birds and squerritts, what is sent by the seamen is so abused that seldome few or none come to hands, they pretending the ratts kill them, which I confess are soe numerous that I wonder they dont fall foule of the ships gange. I was glad to heare my cosen Sarah \* was married, but I heare since (though it were with her father's consent) yet he proves not soe good, either in estate or condition as was expected.

"I hope all your pritty little ones are in health, which God grant they may long soe continue, that shall alwaies be the prayers of, Deare Neece,

"Your affectionate Uncle and humble servant

"HEN: CHICHELEY."

Five children had now been born to the Legh couple, four daughters and one son. These events were certainly amongst the most momentous of their happy lives. Each child, as it came, they counted as another blessing—a fresh link in the

\* Sarah, youngest daughter of Sir Thomas Chicheley; married, about 1672, Andrew Fountaine of Salle, with whom, owing to his ill usage, she led a very unhappy life.



## PRIVATE LIFE AND PLEASURES

chain that bound them together with a love that made of their beautiful home an earthly paradise. In 1675 Elizabeth Legh 1675 was expecting the annual baby, and was in some indecision about the selection of a monthly nurse, having evidently quarrelled with the one she usually engaged. Richard writes to her from London on April 25, 1675 :

“ DEAREST,

“ This day my Cos: Tom: Cholmondeley \* and I dined with my Lord of Ormond.† After dinner Frank Cholmondeley ‡ and I met in Whitehall and went by water to London Bridge. Thence we footed it to the Old Exchange, and some things I bought there that thou didst order. . . . Deare Soule, be not troubled for sending for Mistress Penington if thou hast a mind to her; thou never didst make any solemn vow against her. What resolutions you made were out of some little passion, soe doe not think but thou mayest safely be reconciled to her. However, if thou shouldst scruple itt, be of good courage, there is as good as either Nan Shield or Mistress Penington. Consult my sister Ardern § or Brooke || in that point.”

A few days later, he writes again, having taken Sir Thomas Chicheley's opinion in this important matter :

“ DEARE SOULE, be not troubled for Nan Shield. I was speaking to my father how concerned you were that you had made a hasty promise never to have Mistress Penington again. He laughed at itt, and said you might safely take her, ‘ Nay,’ says he, ‘ those promises are better broke than kept,’ so in God's name take thine own free choice.”

His great anxiety was to get home to her with as little delay as possible :

“ I was in hopes I might have guessed at some little time when I might have been in that happiness I long for—thy deare Company, but the affaires amongst us are so various and everyone's expectations raised

\* *Cholmondeley*, Thomas (see p. 44).

† *James Butler*, first Duke (1610–88), occupied important positions under Charles I, Charles II, and James II; married Lady Elizabeth Preston, daughter of Richard, Earl of Desmond. The Duke of Ormonde retired from public life in 1685, broken by the deaths of his wife and children.

‡ *Cholmondeley*, Frank, brother of Thomas Cholmondeley; born 1635–6; Gent. Com. of Brasenose College, Oxford; he died s.p. 1713.

§ *Ardern*, Margaret, second surviving sister of Richard Legh; born 1637, married, 1654, Sir John Ardern of Harden, Cheshire, by whom she had a large family.

|| *Brooke*, Francisca Posthuma, so christened because she was born after her father's death, 1639 or 1640; married, about 1656, Sir Richard Brooke of Norton, Cheshire, and had a large family.

## LYME LETTERS

to that height, that I am in a great strait. The old gentleman \* will not heare me talke of leaving him till some friends he hath are upon better grounds."

He tells her he had been invited to go to the Park with Sir John and Lady Chicheley, "but I finde more satisfaction in this writing to thee. A peece of a play I have seen and that's all I intend at this time."

"MY DEAREST SOULE," writes Elizabeth in answer,

"Methinks I am sorry thou shouldst not have the plashuor [pleasure] of seeing a play sometimes, for though in thy absence it is the greatest comfort in the world to me to hear from thee, yet I desire thou may have thy satisfaction as well as I mine. My deare deare, farewell to thee. All thy deare Children are well. Poor Pe † says he dreams of thee, and if he dont, I am sure I do—Thou seest I know not how to give over, though I have but little to writ.

"Adew, Thine whilst

"E. L."

On June 13, 1675, the expected baby arrived, a second son, Thomas. His sponsors were to be Lord Cholmondeley, † Sir Peter Brooke of Mere and Lady Calveley, § Richard's tiresome old aunt, who writes accepting the office, and evidently highly delighted at having been invited to undertake it :

"HONORED NEPHEW,

"I cannot express how joyful the good nus of yr Lady's safe deliver of a son was to me, God of Heaven bles him and send you much comfort of him. i take it as a very great argument of yr Love to me yt you think me worthi of giving him his name which I humble beg may be Hugh." ||

\* His father-in-law, Sir Thomas Chicheley.

† *Peter*, eldest son and heir, born at Lyme, August 1669.

‡ *Cholmondeley*, of Cholmondeley Castle, Cheshire, Robert, created Viscount Cholmondeley of Kellis in 1661; married Elizabeth, daughter and co-heiress of George Cradock of Caverswall Castle, Stafford, by whom he had no children; he died 1681.

§ *Calveley*, of Lea, Mary, daughter of Sir Gilbert Hoghton of Hoghton Towers, Lancashire, married, as his second wife, Sir Hugh Calveley of Lea. He was the only brother of Lettice, wife of Dr. Thomas Legh, the father of Richard, making Lady Calveley, therefore, Richard's aunt by marriage. Sir Hugh and Lady Calveley had no children. Sir Hugh died April 1648, aged 35 (predeceasing his sister Lettice Legh by six months), Lady Calveley died in 1705.

|| The name of her late husband.



## PRIVATE LIFE AND PLEASURES

An amusing letter from Lord Cholmondeley to Richard gives him some advice with regard to the old lady, who was rich and influential, and whose relations were all vying with each other for her favours, she having no children and being able to dispose of her money and her property as she chose :

“ Cholmondeley, July 17, 1675.

“ MONSIEUR LEGH,

“ The cheefe errand of this is to enquire of your welfares and especially of my pretty Godson’s whom I hope all fortune will attend. You being the author of his being and I an instrument of his admission into the pale of the Church. . . . Things would have been better had you called your son either Hugh or Calveley and you gained ground upon your rival, but now he ’as advantage of you especially by presents, horse-litters, ganorangé and what not. You see, how Italy improves men to finde out ways of pleasing women ; especially those that are viel [vielles, old,] which I am sure I shall never learn.”

But Richard was not the man to plot and scheme for the favours of any human being—man or woman, and in his answer to Lord Cholmondeley one can see the reflection of his clear soul :

“ If I am unhappy in my Lady Calveley’s kindnesse, I am soe dull I know not how to retrieve it, and must therefore submit to that fate which I hope will constantly attend honest minds ; downright dealing being a virtue I prize above all the Italian arts or any science myself was ever acquainted with. That shall be my practise, and unto none more than while I can serve you.”

In reply to an inquiry from Lord Cholmondeley whether Richard can recommend him a page, “ a gentile youth, and would willingly have him a gentleman’s son,” Richard returns answer that he fears he cannot recommend anyone suitable.

“ The youth I designed (which I mentioned to your Lordship) does Patrizare too much (for I saw him the other day) that I shall not recommend him. My brother Tom and I have another in our thoughts of whom your Lordship may expect an account in a very few days.”

Pages were youths of noble or gentle birth who, during the Middle and later Ages, served in the households of Royal and noble persons and received a training to fit them for their future position in society. After the fifteenth century, however, the

## LYME LETTERS

practice of educating the higher nobility as pages at Court began to decline, but they continued to form part of the households of great nobles certainly up to the end of the seventeenth century.

The obsequious attitude of many of the country gentlemen of the day towards those in high places was quite foreign to Richard's simple nature. Although he was honoured with the friendship and esteem of both his King and the Duke of York, and was on terms of close intimacy with Cabinet Ministers, peers and other great people of the day, he never fawned upon those in power nor sought to obtain preferment and place, though he might have had both. He was on more than one occasion offered a Court appointment and high office in the Government. But he chose to go his own way, and maintaining his dignity and self-respect, he never sought by plunging into the turmoil of public life to jeopardize either the one or the other. Being informed in a letter on one occasion by some mischief-maker that he had incurred the displeasure of his friend Lord Derby,\* he sends the following dignified reply :

“ I do not know that I did ever disoblige His Lordship, nor doe I hear that his expressions have been against me to that degree, but whilst he frowns upon me, I have noe reason to court him. I know my distance, and though I am noe Lord, I am a gentleman.”

\* *Derby*, William, ninth Earl (1656–1702), succeeded his father in 1672; refused to mingle in politics, preferring to lead the life of a private gentleman. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, Earl of Ossory, and sister of James, second Duke of Ormonde. This Lord Derby died 1702, without male issue surviving; his only son, James, Lord Strange dying unmarried in his father's lifetime.



## CHAPTER VIII

### POLITICAL EVENTS, 1676-8

THE whole history of the latter part of Charles II's reign is one 1675-6 network of corruption and intrigue. Personal aggrandisement, expediency, and the line of least resistance represented the aims and objects of the public men of the day, and in their policy honour and principle found no place. Ministers conspired and worked against each other, and, with very few bright exceptions, were self-seeking and unscrupulous. The King, beset with difficulties on all sides, short of money, and, in spite of his undoubted capacity, incapable of dealing with the complexity of the situation, distracted by the factions wrangling around him, turned first to one Minister and then to another, not knowing whom to trust or whose word to believe.

On the re-assembling of Parliament in 1677 after a pro-1677 rogation of fifteen months, an attempt was made by the "Country Party"—so called to distinguish them from the Cavaliers—to force on a General Election by contending that Parliament, having sat for so long, was in fact dissolved. This plea was not admitted, and Shaftesbury, as head of the "Country Party" in the Lords, was, with Buckingham,\* Wharton† and Salisbury,‡ sent to the Tower for advancing it. A letter from Sir John Chicheley written to Richard at Lyme on June 3, 1677, from Montpellier, France, where the Chicheleys spent two years for purposes of health and economy, gives some rather interesting details :

\* *Buckingham*, George Villiers, second Duke (1628-87); brought up with Charles I's children; after the attack upon him, was dismissed from his office.

† *Wharton*, Philip, fourth Baron (1613-1696), opposed the Conventicle Act in 1670, and the proposed non-resistance oath, 1675; was a prisoner in the Tower for censuring prolonged prorogation of Parliament in 1677; strenuously supported William of Orange, 1688-1689.

‡ *Salisbury*, James, third Earl (1648-83), married, 1661, Margaret, daughter of John Manners, eighth Earl of Rutland.

## LYME LETTERS

“DEARE BRO:

“The last post brought me yrs of ye 26th of April, which has made somewhat a longer stay then ordinary on the way, yet notwithstanding ’twas extreame welcome to us here, who now admires whatever comes from little England; to make us understand our own country is to come back and see what’s admirable here, and I doubt much will not be found besides ye Climate.

“We take it for granted the Parliament is adjourned or Prorogued, since by all letters yt come hither from England we heare Flanders will be permitted to be over-run for any assistance ’tis likely to have from thence. I wish we repent not when ’tis too late.”

1677-8      Another letter from Sir John to Richard, written seven months later, on January 8, 1677-8, mentions the possible date of his joining Lady Chicheley in England the latter end of May, unless war should break out between England and France—a not unlikely contingency :

“DEARE BRO:

“’Twas so long I had not heard from you yt I began to thinke the distance between Lyme and London had made you forget me. You desire to know what time my return may be to England. I do judge ’twill be about the later end of May at furthest, but there’s such talke of War (though my letters make no mention of it) yt I know not but it may be sooner. The grounds of this discourse arises from ye sudden Meeting of ye Parliament, which was intended not to be till April, but that y’ll be better able to judge of then myself whom am at so great a distance.”

Always ready to ask for favours from his rich brother-in-law, Sir John is anxious to know if Richard can provide him with “a Padde or two”; the horse must have “strength, good gates and store of mettle.” He hopes his Master (the Duke of York) “now begins to come to himself; the longer he lives, I doubt not but he’l ye easier be able to judge who are really his friends and those who but pretend to be so.”

Lady Chicheley, in a subsequent letter, written from London to Lyme on January 17, 1677-8, returns to the charge on the question of “the good padde,” which she hopes her husband may find waiting for him on his arrival, “if you have the good fortune to meet with one for him, which he earnestly wishes.”



## POLITICAL EVENTS, 1676-8

This is accompanied by anxious inquiries after the health of poor Elizabeth,

“whose good houre \* I suppose may now be dayly expected, and that it may be with as much ease to her as is safe is heartily prayed for by me who shall not be many weeks after her in the same condition.”

Lady Chicheley mentions the possibility of war :

“You businesses here I suppose will quickly be despatched, war or no war . . . but I hope God and you wise men will order all for the best for us. Everybody here are very well. Lord Russell is dead so our neighbours are Lord and Lady.”

The neighbours she mentions were Lord Russell,† the 1678 “Patriot” and his wife. They lived in Southampton Square, where the Chicheleys also had a house, and were amongst their most intimate friends.

An event which caused a good deal of excitement in 1678 was the trial for murder of Philip, seventh Earl of Pembroke, who, in a drunken brawl, so maltreated one Nathaniel Cony that he succumbed to his injuries. Pembroke’s trial by his peers took place in Westminster Hall. Huge crowds assembled, scaffolds were erected and seats fetched five, ten, and twenty shillings. “God send him good riddance out of this world,” comments Lady Chicheley, “for he is very troublesome.”

Pembroke was, however, convicted of manslaughter only, and pardoned. He had all his life been notorious for barbarous conduct and profligacy. In November 1677 he nearly killed a man in a duel. He was committed to the Tower by the King in 1678 for blasphemous words, and was only released on the petition of the House of Lords. No sooner was he at liberty than he so terrorised one Philip Rycout that he petitioned the House of Lords to protect him from Pembroke’s violence. Then followed the murder of Cony, after which this noble Lord killed an officer of the Watch while returning from a drunken

\* Elizabeth’s sixth daughter and eighth child, Margaret, was born at Lyme on January 31, 1677-8.

† *Russell*, William Lord (1639-83), married Rachel Wriothsley, daughter of Lord Southampton and widow of Lord Vaughan.

## LYME LETTERS

bout at Turnham Green. He came into Court, pleaded the King's pardon and was discharged. The author of countless crimes, he was denounced as "one who had drunk himself into insanity."

This charming individual married, in 1679, Henriette de Quérouaille, sister of the Duchess of Portsmouth, but luckily for posterity left no children.

In acknowledging the present of "a fine cheese" Lady Chicheley mentions Sir John's intention of setting out from Montpellier on April 1, but that it may be six weeks or two months before his arrival can be expected. Her baby meantime has appeared :

"My girl, a dainty pert one, but she hath but a pitiful Nurse, which is myself, and am very unwilling to give it over though I have but little milk. My hopes are itt will be better when I get abroad."

Richard Legh, whose health was in a very unsatisfactory condition, paid a long visit to Bath about the end of July 1678, hoping to derive benefit from the waters, and was not back at Lyme before October.

Sir Thomas Chicheley writes to Lyme summoning his son-in-law up to London :

"This business will give the Parliament work at their Meeting where I hope you will be, for we shall have great store of work and of infinite concern, and I would not have you absent from it nor any good man. My blessing on you all."

He evidently anticipates that Richard's departure from Lyme will cause poor Elizabeth much distress :

"Pray send me word how your wife's eyes do and whether she is so foolish as to hurt them with crying, that I may chide her which I am not forward to do, for I love her and you very well and know you both deserve great kindnesse from me and when you come to towne you know your lodging is to be with me who am, Deare Son,

"Your most affectionate father

"THO: CHICHELEY."

In obedience to this summons Richard set out from Lyme, and writes on November 28 to Elizabeth from Southampton Square, rather peevish with his father-in-law for having—as he



## POLITICAL EVENTS, 1676-8

conceived—torn him unnecessarily from Elizabeth's restraining arms :

"The last night, dear Soule, I came safe and well to this place. I thanke God I finde all friends well; particulars as to them I cannot now mention, being run from the company that dined heare today to write these, and my Lord Gorges \* is come in to see me, and we must again to the House att 3 o'clock upon a Conference to be had with the Lords why they doe not put the Lord Treasurer † into custody. The sending the Messenger is not off my mind yet but some have paid vast sums—40 and 50 guineas.‡

"When I was saying today as we came in the Coach with my Lord Russel § home to dinner here, that itt was hard upon me because the notice I had was short; itt came but upon the Monday night to command me to be there on the Wednesday. 'Yes,' says Sir Thomas, 'did not I give you notice before that? But' says he, 'you did not regard me.' So here 'tis a fine thing of *ridicule*, and soe no more of this. The Duke of Albemarle || has a discovery of 200,000<sup>l</sup> yt is brought into England for managing this Plot, and at Harwich he seized 10,000<sup>l</sup> of it in gold."

These summonses to London were very unpopular, and the country gentlemen were ever ready to take advantage of any handy excuse for not obeying them, the excuses not always being strictly truthful ones. Richard reports a case in point where, owing to some mischief-making, one of his friends, Sir Geoffry Shakerley, ¶ got into trouble.

"Poor Sir Geoff: Shak: has ill luck and could neere expect better from that old whelpe whose fate my Lord Molyneux \*\* read. It seems he writt a letter to his brother Sir Roger Bradshaigh †† to excuse him

\* *Gorges*, Lord, of Dundalk, his parliamentary colleague.

† *Danby*.

‡ For the fines inflicted upon Members of Parliament (see p. 78).

§ *Russell*, Lord (see p. 71).

|| *Albemarle*, Christopher Monck, second Duke (1653-88), Colonel of the 1st Horse Guards and Captain of all the King's Guards, 1679; raised the Devon and Cornwall militia against Monmouth in 1685; Governor-General of Jamaica in 1687; died there.

¶ *Shakerley*, Sir Geoffry, Governor of Chester Castle; married first, Katherine, daughter of W. Pennington; secondly, Jane, daughter of J. Dolben. Sir Geoffry died 1696.

\*\* *Molyneux*, Caryll, third Viscount, outlawed by the Parliament for loyalty to Charles I, but by interest and payment of a large fine was put in possession of his estates; died 1698-9, aged 77.

†† *Bradshaigh* of Haigh, Sir Roger, born 1627; married, 1647, Elizabeth, daughter of W. Pennington, so that Lady Bradshaigh and Lady Shakerley were sisters.

## LYME LETTERS

from coming up and another to Tom Cholmondeley \* who made his excuse and said Sir Geoffry was not well, and Sir Roger did second itt. Then up starts Sir John Hanmer,† ‘ ’Twas very lately they had heard that news, for ’ says he, ‘ Sir Roger showed me a letter from him by the last Post wherein he desired him to meet him at a Cocking in Lancaster.’ This letter Sir Roger had showed to Sir John as a good jest and poor Sir Geoff: must pay a Messenger in good earnest. Unfriendly done of them both.”

To Richard’s noble and upright character such double dealing was as repugnant as it would have been impossible in his own case. He could no more have told a lie or have been guilty of any dishonest or dishonourable action than he could have killed one of his own children.

A very characteristic letter from him to Roger Kenyon is amongst the Kenyon MSS.

“ There is an old proverb or saying ‘ whose presence does no good their absence does no harm.’ Had your Lord Lieutenant given me notice, I should not have deserted my King’s service, but I never heard of your meeting.”

Richard writes to his wife on December 31, 1678 :

“ Here is more news. The citizens are so fond of the Lord Shaftesbury ‡ att their great charge they allow him a Guard to secure his person and the Bishop of London another. The King, it is said peaches Montague and will release ye Treasurer tho’ he be sent to the Tower.

“ I shall be uneasy my Deare Soule till tomorrow, having had no line from thee since I left thee.

“ The King has Prorogued his Parlt yesterday until February 4, soe I am preparing to come to thee which is the greatest joy of my heart.”

Sir Thomas Chicheley was evidently remorseful at having brought his son-in-law up to London unnecessarily in such hot haste, particularly as the hard riding had evidently much over-exhausted his delicate frame :

“ I am glad of one thing and that is to see how concerned Sir Thomas is for the trouble I have had of this journey which I hope will prevent more if ever the Parliament sit again which is a question. I cannot say till this day that I have recovered itt.”

\* *Cholmondeley*, of Vale Royal, Thomas (see p. 44).

† Query, Was this the old whelpe?

‡ *Shaftesbury* (see p. 62).



## POLITICAL EVENTS, 1676-8

On the anniversary of Richard's eighteenth wedding-day, January 1, 1678-9, his father-in-law presented him with a propitiatory gift of eighteen pies, one for every year of his marriage, "and hopes," says Richard in a letter to Elizabeth at Lyme,

"thou wilt be friends with him, but it was not in the power of him or any to have excused for me and had I not come as I did my fees had been double."

To return the compliment, Elizabeth is to send up to her father at once "one of thy best soules of brawne," Sir Thomas having feasted the Attorney-General and others upon some of the Wimpole ones, "which they commended, but 'tis far short of thine." The Lyme brawns were always baked; this Sir Thomas considered to be the wrong process, but, upon Richard's "vindicating it," "Sir Thomas told me he wouldn't believe me till he saw it, so thou seest my reputation is at stake."

In a later letter he mentions that the King has been very uneasy since the Prorogation, "I pray God spare his life." He describes everybody as being "sorely dejected, things look dismally and Brother Fountaine [always in money difficulties] sick of the fretts."

Various matters kept him in London till the middle of 1678-9 January. He writes to Elizabeth on the 11th:

"Thy last came to my great satisfaction my deare Creature yesterday, and God willing upon Monday I intend to come towards thee which is the greatest pleasure I expect or can imagine, for though I have the happiness of as much kindness as is possible from thine and my friends heere, yett 'tis not like being at home with thee, my deare Soul and my deare Children, but no more of this subject till the happy houre. In the meane time and for ever may the blessing of Heaven and earth attend thee and thine."

For political news he tells her:

"They say the Parlt is to meet tho' I heare little reason for it. The Priests live and the Lords are safe enough at present, though the Lord Stafford \* as I told you is secured closer than ever. That which gives

\* *Stafford*, William, first Viscount (1614-80), accused by Oates of being paymaster of the Catholic Army, and by others of persuading them to murder Charles II. Beheaded in 1680.

## LYME LETTERS

confidence to this report is that the Lord Treasurer shold say he will stand or fall by ye House, but under the rose I heare he has sent forty people up and downe the Towne to take up all the Guineas and they are risen to 2\* pence apeece.

“ Adieu deare Soul

“ I am thine whilst

“ R. LEIGH.”

This may perhaps refer to the shares of the South African or Guinea Company, established in 1663, when the coin first came into use. The Company had factories for preparing the gold on the North Coast and Gold Coast of Africa, and this trade brought in a yearly supply of £200,000 or £300,000 to the Mint, and was also connected with the slave trade, providing the American plantations with negroes. The guinea coin continued to be circulated until 1817, when it was superseded by the sovereign.

Pepys in his “ Diary ” for October 29, 1666, has a similar reference :

“ To my Goldsmith, to bid him look out for some gold for me ; and he tells me that ginnys, which I bought 2000 of not long ago, and cost me but 18½d change will now cost me 22d ; and but very few to be had at any price. However, some more I will have, for they are very convenient, and of easy disposal.”

The State Papers for 1664 give an illuminating example of the habits of the day, and of the gambling that went on with the public money. T. Ross in a letter to Sir John Williamson dated November 12, 1664, expresses regret that his pupil, the Duke of Monmouth—then aged 15—had had anything to do with “ the Wool business.” “ His Grace hath lost most of their stock at play, there being no other diversion, the ginea gold rolls freely.” He cannot wish his little Lord to be “ singular and sit whilst others lose £5 with cheerful satisfaction.”

\* Probably intended for “ 22 pence.”



## CHAPTER IX

### CHARLES II's LAST PARLIAMENT

So much has been said in the Legh letters about the sittings 1678-9 and doings of the Houses of Parliament, that it may not be out of place to mention some details connected with the procedure of the great Council of the Realm in the reign of Charles II.

Members of the House of Commons were first summoned to sit in 1265, during the reign of Henry III. In those days the sittings were held at the very early hour of eight a.m., sometimes even at six or seven, continuing till eleven o'clock; the Committee being appointed to sit in the afternoon. On the accession of Charles II, nine o'clock a.m. was the usual hour for commencing public business, and four o'clock in the afternoon for the House rising. Later on, ten o'clock a.m. was the ordinary time of meeting, and the practice of nominally adjourning the House until that hour continued until 1806. Richard Legh frequently mentions going down to the House between ten and eleven a.m.

Many people imagine that the payment of Members of Parliament is of only recent times. It is, however, a very ancient custom, dating from 1265, the year the House of Commons was first summoned to sit, but the members' "wages" were paid by their constituents. They also reimbursed their representatives for the expenses they were put to in journeying to and from the place of meeting. In 1322, by a statute of Edward II, the salary of a knight was fixed at four shillings a day, that of a citizen or burgher at two shillings. These payments could be enforced by writs. According to Jennings' "Anecdotal History of Parliaments," the last payment of "wages" to a member occurred in 1681, but Pepys, in his "Diary" for March 30,

## LYME LETTERS

1668, speaks as if the practice had ceased—at any rate for a time—by that date :

“ At dinner we had a great deal of good discourse about Parliaments. . . . But all concluded that the bane of the Parliament hath been the leaving off the old Custom of the places allowing wages to those that served them in Parliament, by which they chose men that understood their business and would attend to it, and they could expect an account from, which now they cannot ; and so the Parliament is become a Company of men unable to give an account for the interest of the place they serve for.”

Richard, in his letters, constantly mentions his fears of being fined for absence from duty. The penalties imposed upon absentee members were very severe, and varied with the times and temper of the House. Occasionally imprisonment was inflicted for any flagrant case, but fines—from ten to twenty pounds—or the forfeiture of their “wages” were the more usual form of punishment.

During the reign of Charles I the attendance of members—even in debates of the highest consequence—became very slack. Clarendon mentions that there were often not more than a fifth part of their number in the House of Commons, and about a dozen in the House of Lords. Fines for being late at prayers were one shilling in 1641.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century the imposition of fines seems to have ceased. The power of inflicting them rested with the House ; the Speaker, in virtue of his office, merely executed its orders.

1679 Richard Legh having made up his mind to retire from public life after the dissolution of the Cavalier Parliament in January 1678–9, which had sat for the last seventeen years, was thoroughly enjoying his leisure with his wife and dear children in the peace and seclusion of beautiful Lyme. He found quite enough work in the care and management of his estates in Lancashire as well as in Cheshire, and local matters, in which he always took the greatest interest, gave him plenty of occupation. In the magnificent hospitality which he dispensed, he was keeping up the best traditions of his ancient house where, from time imme-



# CHARLES' LAST PARLIAMENT

morial all were made welcome, and none were ever sent empty away. In the words of a contemporary : \*

“How welcome all Persons were to his Table hath as many witnesses as it had Guests ; where there was always the greatest plenty that could be on this side excess ; and which he seasoned with that generous Freedom and Cheerfulness of Humour, that gave a pleasant Relish to all the rest. In short, There was such an Affluence of all things, so great a resort of Persons of Quality, that his House might very well be styled a County Court, and Lyme the Palace of the County-Palatine of Chester.” †

In August 1679 Lady Chicheley paid a visit to Lyme with her father-in-law Sir Thomas Chicheley, and after her departure, sends Richard the same sort of “Collins” as we should write after a visit at the present day :

“DEAR BROTHERE,

“I am sorry to heare by your letter to Sir John ‡ that you have not received our letters ; how Mrs. Langley § sent them I know not. She owns she had them and saith she sent them, but whether to you or not God knows, for they came back to me again and by the next post she begged pardon for it which I could hardly grant her, lest you should think me negligent. I hope before now you are satisfied I endeavoured to returne you thanks for our kind entertainment, as well as Sir Thomas, who laughed att me to see that his letter could come as soone to you as that which I writ by the first post after our arrival at Wimpole.|| By the strength of the good things we had at Lyme, as well as the good aire, thank God he is very cheerful and well, and we, (after our prosperous elections in Cambridgeshire) came to the Square ¶ on Tuesday night, where, thank God, I also met my Goodman in health, who drudges every day either at the Tower or Navy, but wishes himself in Cheshire, and tells sometimes he hath a good mind to come to you for a day or

\* The Rev. William Shippen, D.D., Rector of Stockport in his funeral sermon on Richard Legh of Lyme, which was published at Oxford in 1688. This Dr. Shippen was the father of William Shippen, the great leader of the Tories in the reigns of George I and George II, and a most distinguished man. Dr. Shippen was also the father of Robert Shippen, President of Brasenose College, Oxford, and sometime Vice-Chancellor of that University, who married, as her fourth husband, Frances, third daughter of Richard Legh of Lyme.

† See “The House of Lyme,” p. 219.

‡ Her husband, Sir John Chicheley.

§ *Mrs. Langley*, the wife of Thomas Langley, secretary to Sir Thomas Chicheley ; she acted as housekeeper to the Chicheleys.

|| *Wimpole*, Sir Thomas Chicheley's place in Cambridgeshire.

¶ *Southampton Square*, where the Chicheleys had a house.

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two, but I tell him he shall not, since he would not contrive it to be there with us, so do not put him in mind of it. . . . Joaney Moore \* had but three fitts of a fever, and the fourth carried him away; he died yesterday morning, coming from that rotten place Portsmouth, whither he was very unwilling to goe, but nothing would satisfy the imperious Governor † but he must come. Sir John left him pretty well there, but he said to him he should never come to London againe, which proves too true.

Colonel Legge, afterwards Lord Dartmouth, Lady Chicheley had a special grudge against. He had served with distinction in the wars with the Dutch, and was in 1668 appointed Master of the Horse and Gentleman of the Bedchamber to the Duke of York, with whom he was a great favourite. In 1681 he was intriguing to oust Sir John Chicheley—also one of the Duke's favourites—from his post of Master of the Ordnance, to which post Sir John had been named by special licence from the King, on the retirement in 1674 of the then Master, Sir Thomas Chicheley.

Colonel Legge was successful in obtaining this coveted appointment, much to the indignation of the Chicheley family, although there was some six months' discussion as to whether Legge could hold the post as well as that of Governor of Portsmouth. In several letters to him, the Duke of York expresses the opinion that Legge *could* retain both, but, in the event of this not being possible, advises him in that case to decline the Ordnance.

"If they do oblige you to part with Portsmouth," His Royal Highness writes on November 17, 1681, "I shall look on it as a very ill sign to myself." Apparently Legge preferred retaining the Mastership of the Ordnance, for his appointment at Portsmouth terminated on February 4, 1681-2.

1679 The King was very seriously ill at this time; Lady Chicheley writes in this same letter, August 1679:

"'Tis said the King had a very ill day yesterday, but I hope we shall

\* Moore, Sir Jonas (1617-79), mathematical tutor to the Duke of York, then at St. James's.

† Colonel George Legge, first Baron Dartmouth (1648-91), Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.



# CHARLES' LAST PARLIAMENT

hear better news before night. He was let blood, so his fever is not so high as it was, but he's said to be worse for all that."

The better news of the King's health was confirmed, and Charles recovered for the time being.

In October 1680 Charles II's fourth Parliament—that had 1680 been elected a year earlier—was suffered to meet. Its session was short and stormy. Sir John Chicheley writes, on September 30, to Richard Legh at Lyme (who, although living more or less in retirement, still took the keenest interest in all that went on in the great world) reporting intelligence from Newmarket where the King and Court were :

"Friday sennight His Majesty intends back again for London, in order to prepare for ye one and twentieth day of October. "

This was to be the day of the meeting of Parliament.

Sir John gives an account of the Duchess of York and Princess Anne's visit to Cambridge University, where they were subjected to insult from the Master of Pembroke Hall. It is difficult to understand why this should have happened, unless it was due to the religious feeling of the time against Mary of Modena, who was a Papist. This, however, would not apply to the Princess Anne.

"On Tuesday last ye Duchess of York with Lady Anne and several other ladys were to see ye College, where they were treated by ye Provost of Kings \* at a very great dinner. She (?) was entertained at several places with speeches and at the Schooles with ye going out of two noblemen Drs. They went after dinner to see Peterhouse † and Pembroke Hall ‡ at which neither Master nor Fellows would appear to receive them. How 'twas taken you may imagine."

\* *Sir Thomas Page*, who succeeded Fleetwood as Provost of King's College, Cambridge, when the latter became Bishop of Worcester. Page had been tutor to Lord Ossory—the friend of Evelyn—and he afterwards acted as private secretary to Lord Ossory's father, the great Duke of Ormonde when the Duke was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He is said to have died suddenly on August 8, 1681, in the act of rebuking an irregular scholar.

† *Peterhouse*, or *Peter's College*, Cambridge, founded by Hugo de Balsam, a Benedictine monk in 1234. In 1680 its Master was Joseph Beaumont, D.D. (1616–99), distinguished for his extraordinary love of learning. In spite of his many good qualities, the College did not greatly flourish during his Mastership. Mediocrity reigned, and there was much intemperance. ("College Histories," by Douglas Maclean.)

‡ *Nathaniel Coga* succeeded the former Master in 1677; he was Vice-Chancellor in 1681, and afterwards D.D. Rector of Feltwell St. Nicholas in Norfolk and of

## LYME LETTERS

On the 21st of October he gives an account of the opening of Parliament :

“ This day between 9 and 10 we met in ye old Chapel at Westminster, where about 11 o'clock ye Black Rod came and commanded our attendance of His Majesty in the House of Peers. By ye next you shall have his Speech. Ye chieftest point was yt they should not meddle with ye Succession and for aught else, as far as in him lay, they would meet with a compliyanse. After we returned from their Lordships we went to ye choice of a Speaker ; the House, nemine contradicente, chose Mr. Williams, ye Recorder for Chester, by which you may judge which party is likely to be ye most prevelent.”

This was Mr. afterwards Sir William Williams,\* who became the recognized champion of the House against all extension of Royal Prerogative. The following is the King's speech, a MS. copy of which had been duly forwarded to Lyme :

“ MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“ The Improvement that I have made of the severall Prorogations during this interim of tyme, is an alliance with Spain and Holland, though not yet perfected and I hope will not come too late. I would make a thorough inspection into the plott, for neither you nor I can be safe till that be done. And that the Lords in the Tower be brought to speedy Justice, and if you can Study or finde out any convenient way to secure the Protestant Religion, soe that you medle not to devert the succession of the Crown from the right lyne, I shall willingly agree thereto. It hath bin my endeavour to keepe you in peace as hitherto I have done, and I hope to leave you in peace when I dye. I have been att great Charge in Preserving Tangier, I need not remind you of what great Consequence it is to the Nation and I cannot in probability continue the preservation thereof without your assistance. I hope your tyme will not be taken up in unnecessary Debates, And if what I have layd before you should misse of its desir'd effect, I take God and the World to witness the fault shall not lye at my Doore.”

The suppression of Popery was the paramount object of the House of Commons. The King, besides what he said in his

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Framlingham in Suffolk. He is remembered among the benefactors of Pembroke ; he died 1693. (“ Historical Account of the Masters of Pembroke Hall,” by Matthew Wren, Bishop of Ely.)

\* *Williams*, Sir William, first Baronet (1634–1700), Recorder of Chester, 1667–84 ; knighted and appointed Solicitor-General in 1687 ; he appeared for James II against the seven bishops in 1688.



## CHARLES' LAST PARLIAMENT

Speech, sent word through Sir Leoline Jenkins \* that he would join in any bill against Popery, provided the House did not interfere with the succession. It proceeded to deal with that question in a drastic manner. Commissions were established and instructions were issued to their members to "persecute all Papists above the age of 16 to a correction." Attendance at church was made compulsory. The churchwardens and constables of the different parishes were made responsible for reporting—at their monthly meetings—all absentees. These were fined 12 pence for every Sunday's absence from church, the money obtained by this means to be used for the poor of each parish. It was a return to the tyranny of Queen Elizabeth.

In November 1680 the Exclusion Bill was again brought forward and easily passed through the Commons :

"The Bill against the Duke was read a third time without any debate and ordered to be engrossed,"

writes Richard Sterne † to Richard Legh on November 9. There was a good deal of feeling displayed on the subject. Lord Ferrers' chaplain was ordered to be put in custody for having in a coffee-house, "being in drink," added insulting remarks to the printed votes; under one "a damned lie," under a second "1641-2," and under the names of those who voted for the expulsion of the Duke of York he wrote "voted like a pack of Knaves."

Chiefly through the influence of Lord Halifax, the Lords 1680 rejected the bill by 63 votes to 30. The furious Commons thereupon stopped supplies, refused to pass laws, and declared the great Fire of London to be the work of Papist incendiaries.

The violent quarrel between the Lords and Commons is referred to in a letter from Richard Sterne to Richard Legh, bearing date December 23, 1680 :

"We have ordered ye Bill for the banishing of the Principall Papists to be read ye 2d time tomorrow morning, ye penalty is felony without

\* *Jenkins*, Sir Leoline (1623-85); civilian and diplomatist; Secretary of State, 1680-4; led the opposition to the Exclusion Bills.

† *Sterne*, Richard, probably a son of the Archbishop of York; he sat as member for Ripon borough in the Parliaments of 1678, 1679, and 1680-1.

## LYME LETTERS

benefit of Clergy, and not to be pardoned but by Act of Parliament expressly naming them. Algernon Sidney \* intends to petition again and I doubt will turn out little Drake,† who is newly returned and sworn. For ye truth is neither house is so right as they should be. But I hope we shall keep our Popery and ye Lords Toleration.”

In January 1681 Charles II dissolved Parliament and again appealed to the country. A correspondent of Richard's hopes that a Parliament may be returned

“such who cordially and sincerely love and honour ye King, and not such who by publique Reflection endeavour to render his Person and government odious to his people and by robbing him of his prerogative and of ye love of his people, prepare him for Ruin by ye Rebellion of his own subjects. I hope neither greatness, Relation, or particular obligation will swaye yr votes to a partiality. If wee desire our parliament maye sit and serve, let us endeavour to send such men to it who are of loyal and peaceable principles, lest by ye Repeated affronts and Indignities offered to Majesty itself, this should prove our last parliament.”

And so it turned out to be—the fifth and last Parliament of Charles II's reign.

\* *Sidney*, Hon. Algernon (1622–83), republican; son of Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester; negotiated with Louis XIV with the view of raising a revolt in England in 1666; sent to the Tower on the discovery of the Rye House Plot, executed, 1683.

† *Drake*, Sir William, Knight. In the “Parliament of England” there appears this notice in the returns of members elected for Agmondesham Borough, Bucks, on December 18, 1680:

“Sir William Drake Knt, vice the Hon: Algernon Sidney, esq and Sir William Drake, bart, whose election was declared void.”

There appears to have been some confusion with regard to these two names. A footnote attached to the name of Sir William Drake, *Bart*, says: “Described as Knight in the Indentures, dated Aug. 7, 1679, and as Baronet in the Writ attached to the Indenture, dated 18 December 1680, and in the Order of the House of Commons touching this Borough, dated December 1680.” (Commons Journals.) Sir William Drake, *Knight*, continued to represent this borough with different colleagues until his death in 1690.



## CHAPTER X

### THE WIT OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

AMONGST the papers at Lyme are a quantity of poems, lampoons, 1680  
skits and doggerel, mostly political, all in manuscript and in  
different handwritings, chiefly of the seventeenth and eighteenth  
centuries. Many of these are extremely coarse and have not  
even the redeeming quality of being either interesting or amusing.  
But amongst them is a document \* of about the date 1673? which I think quite worth printing if only for its wit and originality, and as throwing a curious light upon the popular feeling in the country regarding the chief personages in the Government, and the intensely strong and bitter prejudice that existed against the Papists. The policy, characteristics, qualities and vices of the various prominent personages—men and women—in the society and politics of the day, are treated as lots in a catalogue, forty-four in all, to be sold by auction, and are described as would be different objects of art in a sale. Despite its coarseness, I have decided to print all that is possible of this very curious document, only eliminating what is really unfit for publication :

“ On Monday the 27th of [date omitted in the MS.] are to be sold att  
Publick Sale by Inch of Candle † at ye Royall Coffee Howse near Char-  
ing Cross these following goods in severall parcells

“ 1 Lott. One whole peece of the Dutchesse of Cleveland's ‡

\* I find that it has been published in “ Poems on Affairs of State,” printed in 1704.

† *Sale by inch of Candle.* This curious custom obtained, Ashton says, in the reign of Queen Anne, but we know that it was in vogue in 1673? An inch of candle was placed on a piece of board, nine inches square, and lighted by one of the parish officers. The last bidder before the candle went out secured the Lot. This custom continued in certain parts of England up to 1873, and selling by inch of candle still prevails in, I believe, the county of Dorset.

‡ *Cleveland*, Barbara Villiers, Countess of Castlemaine and Duchess of Cleveland (1641–1709).

## LYME LETTERS

honesty, Willow greene, valued at a Crowne p. yard, to advance 2d p yard each bidding.

“ 2 Lott. Two Ells of Nell Gwin’s\* virginity in 3 peeces, 1 Bow-dye and 2 black . . . and a little better at 3d p yard, and to advance 2d each bidding.

“ 3 Lott. Two Remnants more at the same price, to advance in like manner.

“ 4 Lott. Two rich Royall Camlett Cloakes faced with the protestant Religion and very little the worse for the wearing, valued at 4l to advance 2s 6d each bidding.

“ 5 Lott. Two whole peeces of the Duke of Buck: † religion, 7 yards wide, the one white the other black att 50s the peece to advance 1s each bidding.

“ 6 Lott. 14 yds  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a Chancellor’s ‡ Loyalty in 5 Remnants, the first of his late Majesty’s colour, the 2d Orringe Tawney, the 3d of praise God Barebones,§ the 4th of the Protector, the 5th of his present Majesty’s colour, prized att a noble p. yard, to advance 2d p. yard each bidding.

“ 7 L. Some Remnants more ready mixt, and fit for the Loome, if the Chancellor live and have good luck to exercise his Talent.

“ 8 L. A box of curious Legerdemaines of Haver-du-pois, amongst whom is an Act for stealing away a Chancellor’s head from the block and laying a Treasurer’s || head instead of it, a new Invention of ye Ld Chancellor’s ¶ and Ld St. John’s,\*\* valued at 10,000l to be advanced 500l each bidding.

“ 9 L. A rare Cardinall’s Capp brought from Rome by Merchant Patrick †† at the price of 3 Crownes, to advance with discretion, but note

\* *Gwyn*, Nell (1650–87); one of her sons by the King was created Duke of St. Albans in 1684.

† *Buckingham*, George Villiers, second Duke (1628–87), see p. 69.

‡ After Clarendon’s disgrace in 1667 the Great Seal was given to Sir Orlando Bridgeman without the office of Chancellor. In 1672 Bridgeman was removed from office and the Seal was given to Shaftesbury with the post of Chancellor, which he held till 1673, when it was conferred upon Heneage Finch, afterwards Earl of Nottingham, who held the post until his death in 1682.

§ The *Barebones* Parliament, was composed of 122 persons summoned by Cromwell to meet on July 4, 1652; suddenly dissolved in December of the same year. It took its name from one of its members—a leather-seller.

|| Sir Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby and afterwards Duke of Leeds (1631–1712); Lord Treasurer from 1673–9. ¶ *Shaftesbury* (see p. 62).

\*\* Probably William, eighth Baron St. John, died unmarried, 1720.

†† *Patrick*, Father, the confessor of Catherine of Braganza. He was supposed to have obtained such influence over Charles II, that the King sent word to the Queen of Spain that he was determined to become a Catholic. (Colbert to Pomponne, quoted by Forneron in his “Life of the Duchess of Portsmouth,” p. 75.)



# SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WIT

that nobody must bidd anything till the Royall Family hath had the refusall.

“ 10 L. Two hundredweight of the Ld Arlington’s\* best sweet-scented cutt dryed policie, att 22d or thereabouts, pte to advance 1d each bidding.

“ 11 L. Three Hogsheads more in the leafe of the same, at 7d, pte to advance  $\frac{1}{2}$  each bidding.

“ 12 L. 21 peeces of fine french gold coloured ell broad Bribes, of the Ld Treasurers’,† valued whilst ye parliat sate at 600,000l to advance 200l each bidding.

“ 13 L. 4 dozen of new fashiond writts, for the choice of soe many Membrs of parliamt in the place of those that are dead, all as good as new, nere the worse for useing, at 10 groates p Dozen, to advance 1d p. dozen each bidding.

“ 14 L. ffive or Sixe new Burgesses of parl<sup>t</sup> amongst which is Alderman Backwell‡ for Andover and Mr. Egerton for Wickham, and never wore above a moneth, it cost the owners in the first penney above 2000l a place, now to be sould againe for 2 dozen bottles of Canarie advance.

“ 15 L. Contains 34 refined postponed bills, which are to bee honestly paid when the Devil is blind, amounting to 87,366l att 10d pte full 5d p<sup>te</sup> for each bidding.

“ 16 L. Mal Davies,§ Jane Farrar and about a dozen paire more of cast Jades . . . bought of their fathers at 1000lb a peece, to be sould now for halfe the money.

“ 17 L. A very fine Caball Cage with 5 or 6 Canarie birds all of differing notes to make ye better Consort.

“ 18 L. A very rich Cabinett containing severall knick knacks . . . of his Highness and Carnegy,|| and many rarities of unestimable value,

\* *Henry Bennet*, Earl of Arlington (see p. 20).

† *Danby*?

‡ *Backwell*, Edward (died 1683), London goldsmith and banker, probably the chief instigator of the system of banknotes; was a frequent intermediary in money transactions between Charles II and Louis XIV; was sued by several creditors, a large sum being due to him from the Exchequer which Charles II had closed; was sent to Holland on the judgment being given against him; M.P. for Wendover, 1672–3; according to Granger he died in 1679, but the “*Dictionary of National Biography*,” gives his death as taking place in 1683.

§ *Davies*, Mary (flourished 1663–69), actress in the company of Sir William D’Avenant, *q.v.* 1660; mistress of Charles II, 1668; she is frequently mentioned by Pepys as a dancer and Court beauty. He styles her as “the most impertinent slut in the world.”

|| *Carnegie*, Lady Anne Hamilton, daughter of William, Duke of Hamilton, wife of Lord Carnegie, who became Earl of Southesk on his father’s death. She is frequently mentioned in the Grammont Memoirs in connection with the Duke of York. Pepys describes her as “most devilishly painted.”

## LYME LETTERS

which cost the Kingdom many thousand pounds, but now may be bought at an easie rate by any that have a minde of those comodities.

“ 19 L. Two accurate Mapps, the one of a new Queene \* and the other of makeing the Duke of Monmouth Legitimate, both Secundum artem and of the Chancellor's † owne drawing, to be presented to parliam<sup>t</sup> next Sessions, valued at his neck and to be advanced at discretion.

“ 20 L. 5764 Licences for phanatick preachers valued at nothing and to advance pportionably.

“ 21 L. Two peeces of Superfine French A-la-Mode, the one of popery the other of Slavery, belonging to his Grace the Duke of Bucks: ‡ at present in pawne with his word and rich Sword, and left in Lombard Street, valued at 3 Crownes, to be advanced and abated as the bidding on both sides may bee.

“ 22 L. Containeing severall rideing Coates of right true blew Scotch fidelitie, laced with the Covenant and lined with popery, made by the Duke of Lauderdale's § owne Taylor and may be worne either side out, and at 18s Scotch apeece and to advance a halfe penny sterling each bidding.

“ 23 L. Contains the prizes taken by us in the Dutch Warr, which though it cost many 100,000l besides the blood of 10,000 men, yet altogether valued at 800 guineys, to bee advanced 5 guineys every bidding; whereas the Dutch have taken from us already the worth of 3 Millions in Merchandize and shipping, wch may serve as a good demonstration how notably we shall tame and humble them or ourselues if the Warr continue.

“ 24 L. Seaventy five Royall Bastards Boyes and Girles, besides what is now in the pannyere, valued at 50 Guineys, to advance one Guinney each bidding.

“ 25 L. Containes all the offices and places of Command of the papists turned out of Imployment by Land and Sea, which though they are worth at under value 3000l p. Ann. yett the quitted Employ-

\* Shaftesbury had the idea of meeting the danger of a Catholic successor by a dissolution of the King's marriage with Catherine of Braganza and by a fresh marriage with a Protestant princess.

† Shaftesbury.

‡ *Buckingham*, George Villiers, second Duke (1628-87), see p. 69.

§ *Duke of Lauderdale*, John Maitland, second Earl and first Duke (1616-82); secretary for Scottish affairs; had complete influence over Charles II and was supported by him against attacks from the English parliament.



# SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WIT

ments are scarce worth 500l p. ann: and these to bee abated by discretion.

“ 26 L. Containes Brill and Flushing and the whole province of Zealand, with about 10 Millions of money, yett our share is put upp at 9 Nobles, and scarce that if France say not, to bee advanced 10 groates each bidding.

“ 27 L. . . . .

“ 28 L. An excellent Spick and Span new Act of Grace, pardoning onely the Caballs and Coyners of farthings, valued according to its worth and to be advanced at pleasure.

“ 29. L. Two whole peeces of new fashioned paradoxes, the one to suppress popery by ye Suppression of the protestant interest abroad, the other to maintain libertie by the raiseing of a standing Army at home, valued at 5000l to advance at discretion.

“ 30 L. Three violls of rich Essences, the first of Lea, Garraway \* and [blank in the MS.] love unto their country, the 2d of the Earle of Anglesey's † and Lautherdale's ‡ love unto presbiterie, the last of his Majesties' love unto the Phanaticks, all valued att the intrinsick worth, and pportionably to advance each bidding.

“ 31 L. Two new Speakers of the howse of Comons, the first a fool,§ the last a knave, and valued at scarce worth hanging, to be advanced an halter each bidding.

“ 32 L. Two potts of round and sound well pickled protestants, amongst which is Prince Rupert,|| Sr Edward Spragge,¶ Sr Robert Holmes,\*\* Marquess of Worcester,†† Coll: Fitzgerald,‡‡ Coll: Legg,§§

\* Possibly William Garway, of Ford, Co. Sussex, M.P. for Chichester City in 1661 and for Arundel borough in 1678-9, 1680-1, 1685 and 1688-9. In 1667 he was one of the Commissioners for Accounts, and in 1673 was called upon with other Members of Parliament to inquire into the question of Pepys having been accused of setting up an altar or crucifix in his house.

† See p. 28.

‡ See p. 88.

§ Sir Edward Seymour (1633-1708), Speaker on the retirement of Sir Job Charlton in 1673, being unanimously chosen on the nomination of Sir William Coventry. His arrogance made him many enemies. Charles II three times refused to confirm his re-election in 1679.

|| *Rupert*, Prince (1619-82), third son of the Queen of Bohemia.

¶ *Spragge*, Sir Edward (see p. 26).

\*\* *Holmes*, Sir Robert (1622-92), admiral; served under Prince Rupert in the Civil War; distinguished in the War with the Dutch; one of Buckingham's seconds in his duel with Shrewsbury.

†† *Worcester*, Henry, second Marquis and first Duke of Beaufort; opposed the exclusion and was made Duke of Beaufort in 1682.

‡‡ *Fitzgerald*, Colonel, Deputy-Governor of Tangier in 1663; described by Pepys as being “so great with the Duke of York.”

§§ *Legge*, Colonel George, first Baron Dartmouth (1648-91), admiral and commander-in-chief (see p. 80).

## LYME LETTERS

and most of the officers by Sea and Land at 15s p. pott, to advance 1s each bidding.

“ 33 L. A new sett of Irish whores, among whom are the Lady Clanbrasill, the Lady Jane Look, Mrs. Lucy Bryon, and Mrs. Jane ffox, &ct, heated in the near legg before, but abate yett sound wind and limb, bought of the Ld Berkeley, and to bee ordred by Babt May,\* 1000lb a peece, to advance 20lb each bidding.

“ 34 L. Containes the ould Solemn League and Cov<sup>t</sup>, his Majesties' declaracon from Breda with that of the 15th of March 1671, his Royal proclamations ag<sup>st</sup> Catholicks, and that of payeing the Bankers, wth the p<sup>r</sup>sent Sacram<sup>t</sup>, valued altogeather at 5 groates.

“ 35 L. Two dozen of French wenches the one half paid by his Ma<sup>ty</sup> to keep him right to the protestant religion, the other to incline him to the Catholicks, managed by the two factions in the Caball, valued at 2000 lb p. dozen to advance 100l each bidding.

“ 36 L. Three good natured plenipotentiaries which were never guilty of those poine Acts of Magick & Conjureing, sent to convince the ffrench and the world that wee are a meaneing people & haue noe plott or designe in o<sup>r</sup> und<sup>r</sup>taking, valued at 5— $\frac{1}{2}$  to advance a—in all each bidding.

“ 37 L. The Trade of the Manufacture of the kingdome form<sup>rly</sup> twice as good as the Land & thereof valued a Lumping penyworth at 20 Millions a yeare, now to bee sould for the 10th penny w<sup>th</sup> considerable abatem<sup>t</sup> for each bidding.

### ADVERTISEMENT

“ WHEREAS there are 2000 and more Roman Catholick priests in England which were Comanded to depart wthin 30 dayes by his Ma<sup>ties</sup> Royall proclamacon of ye [blank in the MS.] March, now these are to certifie that if any Man or woeman have found any of those persons departing & can testifie soe much und<sup>r</sup> ye hands of credible witnesses, hee or they shall haue 500l for their paines.

“ A postscript of Bookes to bee sold by Mr. Ogleby † at Whitefryars.

\* *May*, Baptist (1629–98), Keeper of the Privy Purse and Page of the Bed-chamber to Charles II. Falling into disgrace, he was succeeded in his office as page by William Chiffinch.

† *Ogilby*, John (1600–76), author and printer; was entrusted with the poetical part of Charles II's coronation, 1661; set up a large printing establishment and became “King's cosmographer”; he was ridiculed by Dryden and Pope, but utilized by the latter.



# SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WIT

“ 38 L. Articles of warr in a large Imperiall paper, translated out of ffrench by Sr Necessity Jenkins,\* and by him presented to his Ma<sup>ty</sup> for to supply the defect of the impotent & superannuated Magna Charta, and for the more expeditious improvem<sup>t</sup> of the Royall Act of hanging, drawing & quartering w<sup>th</sup>out the helpe of Jureys.

“ 39 L. The life & death of the ever renowned & not to bee forgotten John ffelton † written by the malicious Matt: Clifford, & dedicated to his Grace the Duke of Buckingham.

“ 40 L. A Learned and profound treatise of the black Art, with a plaine & easie method how to Conjure, written by Monseur the Extravagant Shepheard of St. Clove, for the perticuler informacon of the D. of Yorke and for as many of the Royall Family as loue to Conjure.

“ 41 L. The Art of makeing brick wthout straw, written by Stephen Primate the Ld Craven's ‡ secretary of the burnt buildings, wherein is shewed a cheape easie & expeditious way for building any part of the Cittie, whenever it shall bee burnd againe, intended for the Queene Mother, but since dedicated to his Highness the D. of Yorke.

“ 42 L. Articles of agreem<sup>t</sup> betweene Scaramouchio § & and the ffrench Amb<sup>r</sup> the Earle of Sunderland, || published to convince the world that hee hath not mispent his time, & whereunto is added his apologie for giving place to the princes of the blood and for his looseing 22000l at play, which is the true reason of his sicknesse & of ye neglecting the Treaty at Cologne.

“ 43 L. The Travells of King Charles the Second wth the witty prancks of makeing knights of the legend written by Toby Rustan ¶ Historiographer Royall.

\* *Sir Leoline Jenkins* (see p. 83).

† *Felton*, John (1595?–1628), of a good Suffolk family; his application to Buckingham for a captain's commission being scornfully refused, he was incited by reading “The Golden Epistles” to plan Buckingham's assassination in 1628; stabbed Buckingham at Portsmouth, 1628, and was hanged.

‡ *Craven*, William Earl of (1606–87), entered the service of Maurice Prince of Orange in 1623; commanded the English troops fighting for Gustavus Adolphus in 1631; contributed £30,000 to the cause of the Palatinate house; said to have been married to the Queen of Bohemia.

§ *Scaramuccio*, an Italian actor of the day. Evelyn mentions his acting before Charles II at Whitehall in 1675, “people giving money to come in which was very scandalous, and never so before at Court diversions.” (Evelyn's “Diary,” p. 302.)

|| *Sunderland*, Robert, second Earl of (see p. 14).

¶ *Rustat*, Tobias (1606–94), Yeoman of the Robes to Charles II; a great benefactor to Cambridge. The bronze statue of Charles II in the middle of the great court at Chelsea hospital, and the equestrian statue of this King at Windsor, were erected at his expense.

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“ 44 L. A strict treaty betweene France and England, being a factious Novell written by the D. of Buck: at the ffrench Camp at Herswick July the 16th 1672, since turned into Heroick verse\* by John Dryden poet Laureat, and now knowne by the name of the Conquest of England.”

\* For this poem I have sought, but in vain, amongst the works of Dryden. Can it possibly be lost, or perhaps not identified as Dryden's?—E. N.



## CHAPTER XI

### DRESS—BURIALS IN WOOLLEN

WITH the Restoration great alterations appeared in the dress of both men and women. The doublet and long cloak ceased to be worn, and men adopted tight knee-breeches and—what ultimately became—the modern coat and waistcoat. Low shoes superseded boots, and the lace band was replaced by a lace cravat. Men often carried muffs suspended round their necks by a ribbon. Ladies' dress underwent corresponding changes. Trains came into fashion despite Catherine of Braganza's love of short gowns. White hoods or cocked hats and feathers were not unusual.

At one time Charles II and his Court adopted Persian dress. Evelyn in his "Diary" for October 18, 1666, says :

"To Court. It being the first time His Majesty put himself solemnly into the Eastern fashion of Vest, changing doublet, stiff collar, bands and cloak, into the comely dress after the Persian mode."

Rugge \* in his *Diurnal* thus describes the new costume :

"A close Coat of Cloth, pinkt with a white taffety under the cutt. This in length reached the calf of the leg, and upon that a sercoat cutt at the breast, which hung loose and shorter than the vest six inches. The breeches, the Spanish cutt, and the buskins, some of cloth, some of leather, but of the same colour as the vest or garment, of never the like fashion since William the Conqueror."

This costume was soon abandoned. Louis XIV, in order to insult the English king, put all his footmen into vests,

"in defiance," says Pepys, "to the King of England . . . the greatest indignity ever done by one Prince to another, and would excite a stone to be revenged."

The rules for mourning in Charles II's time were very strict. Widows wore their heavy weeds for years—even in the case of quite young women. A letter of about the date 1679-80,

\* *Rugge*, Thomas (died 1672?), kept a MS. diary entitled "*Mercurius Politicus Redivivus*," 1659-72, now in the British Museum.

## LYME LETTERS

from a Mrs. Catherine Venables \* to her aunt Mrs. Leveson,† which is amongst the Legh archives, gives some interesting details, and shows how disinclined the poor lady in question was to discard any of her crape :

“ I forgot to send you a gerdle. I will by ye next. You may wear your sleeves as I did ye white one, and if you do not like that way, wear it turned up a little higher and sleeves and ruffle ; nobody wears long sleeves and cuffs with mantus.‡ You must not wear a white bando ; it is not worn but the first three quarters, but cap and cornet and white hood and a black hood hanging behind all of crape. If that mantu fitted you, pray send me word. I did not buy of the best crape, in hopes you would alter your mind and have another Mantu of something else. There was a Lady by when I bought your Crape, and would fain have had me bought your Mantu of a very fine thing which I am sure you would not have worn ; it was black and silver.”

By one of Richard's tailor's bills for the year 1675, we realize that the prices of materials seem to have been exceedingly high, the cost of some articles of dress, however, such as hats and shoes, is correspondingly low. Two hats are priced at £1. A pair of shoes for Elizabeth, £1 4s. Two pair of large worsted drawers “ with stirrups ” cost £2. On the other hand, 26 yards of red Venetian—whether silk or velvet is not stated—at 11/6 the yard, and 10 yards of Lyons Venetian at 15/- the yard seems expensive for those days. Other prices run as follows :

|                                              | £. | s.  | d. |
|----------------------------------------------|----|-----|----|
| “7½ yards of Lyons Mantua at 4/- . . .       | 1. | 10. |    |
| 7 yards of white Avignon at 3/- . . .        | 1. | 2.  | 6  |
| 2 yards of Sky Avignon at 3/- . . .          | „  | 6.  | „  |
| 12 yards of Serdge de Nimes at 5/6 . . .     | 3. | 6.  |    |
| 5 yards of broad tabby at 6/- the yard . . . | 1. | 10. |    |
| 5 yards of Lyons Mantua at 4/- . . .         | 1. |     |    |
| 5 yards of red Venetian . . . . .            | 2. | 6.  |    |
| A velvet cap for Mr Peter . . . . .          |    | 18. |    |
| Paid for a vizzard maske . . . . .           | 2. | 6.  | ”  |

\* *Venables*, Catherine, daughter of Sir Robert Shirley of Stanton Herald, Leicestershire ; married, 1671, Peter Venables of Kinderton, grandson of old Peter Venables, the friend and cousin of Sir Peter Legh. Catherine Venables died 1717, aged 64.

† *Leveson*, Anne, aunt of the above, sole daughter of old Peter Venables by his second wife, Frances, youngest sister of Robert Cholmondeley, afterwards Earl of Leinster ; married Francis Fowler of Harnadge (or Harnesse) Grange, Salop, who assumed the name of Leveson on succeeding to Sir Richard Leveson. He died 1677?

‡ Manto, a gown, properly a garment made of manto, a kind of stuff.



## DRESS—BURIALS IN WOOLLEN

Masks were worn by the ladies of the day, chiefly, it was said, to disguise their features when at the theatre. The gross licentiousness of the drama after the Restoration made it uncomfortable for ladies to sit through these plays, and the mask therefore spared their blushes.

Manufactures were steadily becoming more numerous and 1678 important, though there were no great revolutions in methods; but after the Restoration the example of Holland was largely followed, and the manufacturing industry received a considerable stimulus. Charles II did much to encourage native manufacture, and in 1678 introduced an act for the burial of all persons in woollen. This was in order to encourage the ancient staple manufacture of woollen cloth and paper, and to lessen the importation of linen from beyond the seas.

Until the latter part of the eighteenth century few persons except the very wealthy were buried in coffins. The usual method of burial adopted was to wrap the corpse in a shroud of woollen or other coarse material. If the person were very well off, linen was employed for the purpose. After the passing of the Act, the curate of every parish had to keep a register, to be provided at the charge of the parish, wherein to enter all burials and affidavits of persons buried in woollen. The affidavit was to be taken by the justice of the peace, mayor, or such like officer in the parish where the body was interred. No affidavit was necessary for any person dying of the plague. A penalty of five pounds was exacted for every infringement of this law, one half to go to the informer, the other half to the poor of the said parish. This Act was supposed to be of short duration, yet, according to the Wimpole parish registers, from entries of the burials of members of the Hardwicke family, the penalty was being inflicted long after 1738, the year Lord Hardwicke bought the property from Lord Oxford. The earliest mention of "wrapt in Woollen" amongst the Wimpole registers appears in December 1678, the year the Act was first passed.

The Legh letters for the years 1680-81 have some 1680-1 relating to university life at Cambridge. Although the undergraduates were still kept under the same strict supervision and control as in the Elizabethan and Jacobean days, there was

## LYME LETTERS

a considerable increase in the charge for their maintenance. Whereas Sir Peter Legh's \* sons in 1607-8 were kept at Brasenose College, Oxford, for £30 a year apiece, the expenses at Cambridge in 1680-1 of Richard's young cousin Piers Legh † of Bruch, great-grandson of old Sir Peter Legh, came to £120 a year. This amount was to include £6 a quarter for pocket-money, a none too generous allowance.

Richard was always being appealed to by various relatives to give his opinion in any disputes or difficulties that might arise in connection with the education of their children or the management of their estates. Always anxious to help others with his sage advice and counsel, and despite the fact that he had more on his hands with his own affairs than he could well accomplish, he spared no pains to satisfy the demands of his many relations, and was ever ready to extend to them a helping hand. He even took the trouble to write long admonitory letters—always couched in charming and tactful language—to the young offenders.

His first cousin, Mrs. Frances Bankes ‡ of Winstanley, writes to him in June 1681, respecting her nephew Piers Legh of Bruch (orphaned by the death of his mother in 1661 and his father in 1671), to whom Richard was joint guardian :

“DEAR SIR,

“I rejoice with you at the Tutor's good character of my deare Peirs, and am glad he gives it under his own hand [that] hee came safe to Cambridge. Thirty pounds a quarter or what allowance you judge convenient, wee all consent to; when he went hence he had sixty pound with him and by Carrier immediately after for his travelling Charge and admission expence, which I presume is paid off therewith.”

1681 The poor boy was evidently no scribe :

\* See “The House of Lyme,” p. 86.

† *Legh of Bruch*, Piers, son of Piers Legh of Bruch (and grandson of old Sir Peter Legh of Lyme), by his first wife Margaret, daughter of Edward Hyde of Norbury; born about 1661; fought at Sedgemoor, 1685; died October 1685, buried at Warrington.

‡ *Frances*, sole daughter of Peter Legh of Bruch (youngest son of old Sir Peter Legh) by his second wife, Anne Birkenhead of Chester, eventually sole heiress in blood of her father; married, 1656, William Bankes of Winstanley, by whom she had, with other children, William, married in 1687 to Lettice, eldest daughter of Richard Legh of Lyme.



## DRESS—BURIALS IN WOOLLEN

“We all here received letters from Peirs, and I judge that’s a sore task upon him. My Mother \* (retaining her old chiding faculty) when she heard he had neglected giving you the due respect of a letter, gave him a tune, but all in love.”

The boy’s tutor, James Peake, who was also Vice-Proctor of Cambridge, writes to Richard the following March, reporting on his pupil’s progress, and evidently trying to excuse a certain amount of extravagance :

“HONRD SIR,

“Peirs is in continual expectation of a letter from Lyme, and withall has a great concern upon him lest when it comes to his hands it should bring along with itt ye sad and doleful complaints of Winstanley † against him. I told him yt you had heard from thence of his last large Quarter Bill, and that a lamentable indictment would be brought against him if he did not contract this to come.”

Piers, however, denies consciousness of any extravagance, “and yt in confidence of his own innocency, he pleads not guilty upon his honour.” James Peake supports his pupil and begs that a little encouragement may be given him, “for truly he deserves it as much as ever.”

To his young relative Richard gave this advice, which was to beware of those

“whose business perhaps may draw them to the Alehouse, where you can have no pretence, and it may be they do not design ill to you, but out of their kindness they will show that which may looke kind but in the end will really undoe you, therefore as a friend I give you this admonishment, lest it become a snare to you.”

Piers profited by the good advice and turned out very well. During the Monmouth rebellion he volunteered for active service in Lord Feversham’s ‡ regiment, and fought at Sedge-

\* *Mrs. Anne Legh*, grandmother of the young man; she was a daughter of H. Birkenhead of Backford, Cheshire, by Alice, daughter and heiress of John Singleton of Staining, Lancashire, born 1604 and married as his second wife, Peter Legh of Bruch (youngest son of old Sir Peter Legh of Lyme), by whom she had, Piers (father of the subject of this letter), Thomas, killed at Wunnington Bridge in 1659, and Frances, married to William Bankes of Winstanley. She was therefore 77 at this date.

† Winstanley, near Wigan, Lancashire, the home of his aunt, Mrs. Bankes.

‡ *Feversham*, Louis Duras, Earl of (1640–1700), general, Marquis de Blanquefort in the French peerage, naturalized in England; commanded James II’s troops at the battle of Sedgemoor, July 6, 1685.

## LYME LETTERS

moor. He died of rapid decline in the autumn of 1685, his death probably being accelerated by the privations he had undergone during the campaign.

The terribly high infant mortality of the day is painfully apparent in the family of Sir John and Lady Chicheley. Out of seven or eight children born to them, five died between the years 1673 and 1681. Writing to congratulate her brother-in-law, Richard Legh, on the birth of one of his children, Lady Chicheley speaks of the loss of her eldest son :

“ I pray present her [Elizabeth] with my real service and heartily wish her longer satisfaction and enjoyment of her deare boy than I have had of the sweetest baby yt ever was born, but 'tis my hard hap not to be without one affliction or another, forgive me, good Brother, for I cannot remember him without some melancholy reflections.”

This was Robert, born May 1673, and buried in February 1674, at the age of nine months.

1679 In her letter of August 1679, Lady Chicheley speaks of her surviving children :

“ I hope I left my Babes pretty well at Wimpole, the Boy very well content tho' he hath lost his nurse [herself] and my girl pert again and merry though very weak and a little hotter 2 days before I left her than ordinary. I hope it was only occasioned by a tooth which lyes swelled and ready to cut.”

1681 A later letter, written on May 21, 1681, mentions Sir John, her husband, being at Hampton Court, and

“ my little girl pretty well again, but she hath had some fits of an Ague or very like it, that I almost despaired of having her long.”

Alas ! for the poor little pert maid ! According to the Wimpole parish registers, she was “ wrapped in woollen and buried in the New Vault at Wimpole on November 30, 1681, whereof an affidavit was brought to the Rector of this parish of Wimpole, as is directed by an Act of Parliament.” Another daughter, Isabella, died the following February 1681-2.

Here is a description by Mrs. Langley, the Chicheley house-keeper, of little Sarah, one of the few children who lived to grow up. There is a mezzotint of her at Lyme, holding a garland of flowers ; according to Granger this is from a portrait by





MISTRESS SARAH CHICHELEY

*From a Mezzotint at Lyme by W. Faithorne Junior, from a Painting by  
Closterman*





## DRESS—BURIALS IN WOOLLEN

Closterman, "W. Faithorne, j. sc. This is changed to Smith sc, 1706."

"Mis Sarah is growen ye finest child that euer you see and runs about all day alone as strongly as can bee; she grows every day soe like yr Ladyshipp's Mother,\* that poor Mr. Loueland† is ye doteinglyest fond of her that euer you see a man of a child and is seldom out of ye Nursery when she is there."

Very little is known about this charming woman. I quote from Noble's Continuation of the Rev. J. Granger's work :

"She was a very celebrated beauty and afterwards the wife of — Plowden Esq<sup>re</sup>, descended from a family long resident at Plowden, in Shropshire, of which there is a junior branch settled at Shiplake, in Oxfordshire. This charming woman is said to have died very *unexpectedly* in her bed, and in the height of her beauty."

Two other portraits of Sarah Plowden were painted at the same date, one, also by Closterman, has instead of a garland a necklace in her hands.

Another, inscribed Madam Nicholas, which Lord Oxford thus mentions from his own or Vertue's information :

"This I believe is the same with Mrs. Plowden. Bromley calls the first portrait Sarah Chicheley's, and the painter Kneller, evidently in mistake."

Sarah Fountaine, youngest daughter of Sir Thomas Chicheley, a great character, and, in spite of her very unsatisfactory husband and unhappy life, a most original and amusing woman, writes one of her entertaining letters on March 20, 1681, to her brother-in-law, Richard Legh, at Lyme :

"DEARE DICKY,

"I did fully intend to writ to you before my coming out of town, but really I had noe news and had so many small affairs to despatch, that for 2 or 3 days before my coming away I had not a bit of spirits Left in me, which made me part with all my Square ‡ friends and

\* Sarah, youngest daughter of Sir William Russell of Chippenham, Cambridgeshire, married August 13, 1653 at the church of Deptford St. Nicholas, Thomas Chicheley of Wimpole (see p. 5).

† Rev. James Loveland, Rector of Wimpole (see p. 5).

‡ Her brother and sister-in-law, Sir John and Lady Chicheley, had a house in Southampton Square.

## LYME LETTERS

good Potts \* without shedding one tear. But truly, now I have rested myself, I find the loss of soe good Company very doleful; but thanke God I found my Children in very good health and very good Company; but truly the weather is this day extreamly ill, both wett and cold, so that I fear an ill weeke, if the old proverb † fail not, but whatever it is here, pray God send all affairs and people may look cheerful at Oxford,‡ where the two Knights § did intend to be tomorrow night; but my Goodman stays behind awhile to pay his workmen some money to encourage them to go on apace with my house. I much fear it will not be done before I shall want it, for the first floor will not be done this month yett; but I shall call for more Workmen and get the floors where we are to ly wanscoted, and put off the painting till after I am up again, for that stink soe near will much offend my vapouring brain.”

Andrew Fountaine was building a fine house in Hertfordshire at this date, and Sarah was expecting the birth of her second son and third child, Brigg. The following account of her purchase of furniture and her husband's behaviour to her afterwards is very typical of the man :

“ The furniture that Sir John sent you word of was what I had bargained for of Mrs. Chiffinch (Will Chiffinch's || daughter) who let me have it very nigh forty pound less than an upholsterer valued itt att, and when I had broke the bargain, my spouse did repent, and vowed he would not have itt, soe you must thinke I was in great Concern to come off handsomely, but good Sir Thomas [her father] bid me fetch itt to his house, and there was no doubt but itt might be sold if he [her husband] would not have itt; but after one night's sleep, the hot fit was over and my Spouse then said I should have itt whether I would or no; so unless his mind change again, itt is mine; if itt doe 'tis at your service. Mr. Axden's man, who saw itt att my father's, proferred me twenty pound for my bargain, so I am like to be provided of Customers, for I account myself sure of nothing in this world till full possession. . . . Potts is to come to me in May againe. Truly I long till it comes, for I, like a fool, gave my consent too rashly to let

\* *Mrs. Potts*, a sort of housekeeper and hanger-on, who attended all the interesting events in the Chicheley family.

† Probably the proverb about “ March coming in like a lion.”

‡ The Parliament was sitting at Oxford in 1681.

§ Sir John Chicheley and her husband, Andrew Fountaine, were both returned members for Newton borough, Lancashire, after the retirement of Richard Legh and his colleague.

|| *Chiffinch*, William (1602–88); page to Charles II before 1666. He was employed in secret transactions; he was closet keeper after his brother Thomas's death.



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her go to Mrs Pye,\* (now Sir John Hobert's daughter) but you know I am very hair-brained with my good nature, but poore woman, she was in great perplexity between her old friend and a New, so I thought fitt to yield, but was itt to doe again I would not, for I dearly miss her, for the Condition I am now in occasions many a dolefull thought, now quite alone."

Mrs. Potts, with an eye to business, was evidently going to attend Mrs. Pye in her confinement, Mrs. Fountaine requiring her services the following May; so it is not surprising that the latter should have felt a little anxious as to whether her midwife would get to her in time. She sends messages from her disagreeable husband:

"I assure you he is very sensible of his obligation to you."

This had to do with the election expenses which Richard had paid.

"I could wish he would be as sensible of other people's kindness but Mums the word."

She apologizes for not sending the Gazette, "but there is not one line worth sending," or she would not spare her pains, "though you will say I might spare you and not spare your patience with a cock and a bull."†

Amongst the Legh letters are some written in 1681, relating to the poaching of deer in Lyme Park. This practice was apparently indulged in by Richard's neighbours, who, if not actually taking part themselves in the sport, countenanced and abetted it in their followers and retainers. The great extent of the park, and the large herds of red deer indigenous—as one might say—to the place, made it fairly easy for these depredations to be committed without much fear of detection, and the abuse had continued for some years before Richard felt bound, in self-defence, to take steps to stop what had become a serious annoyance. A statement, drawn up in his own handwriting from the evidence of several witnesses, mentions Colonel Legh of Adling-

\* Pye, Mrs. Philippa, daughter of Sir John Hobart of Blicking, Norfolk, first wife of Sir Charles Pye of Hone; they had no children who survived.

† She may mean a "cock and bull story."

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ton,\* the son of Richard's life-long friend and neighbour, as being the chief perpetrator of the offence. The question was a very difficult and delicate one for Richard to tackle, and he applied for advice to his old friend Dr. William Shippen,† the Rector of Stockport, before approaching Colonel Legh, senior, submitting to Dr. Shippen the draft of the following letter which he proposed sending to his old neighbour :

“ SR

“ I doubt not you have heard ere this of some unkind usage I have had within my park by killing my deer, and that which added more to my trouble, att such a time when they were not dog's meat, in high time, when they were easy to be killed. Bloody arrows were found in my parke and paunches of the deer. For some time I could get no account who should be the guilty party. At last one that had lived lately att Adlington, and some years since had been my servant, (of his own account, unsought for by me) came and told me of two gentlemen who were entertained at Adlington, one of them being famous for shooting in a cross-bow, the other his companion, in a gun. These attended by your keeper, as I am informed, came to ye park and early one morning your keeper brought in a red deer to ye Housekeeper at Adlington. One of them owned yt he gained 60l p. an: by stealing deer out of ye forest. That these two men were invited to Adlington is very plain, looking in Prospect glasses towards Lime park and seeing if there were bargains for them. . . . That my deer has often suffered by greyhounds and guns att all times of the year is also apparent, and that yr Keeper, before he came into yr service, was notorious for loving that sport of stealing deer, and (had I not for his being your servant looked off the exam: I had before me att that time) he had then been detected in the crime.

“ Sir, I was loath to mention these things, and would not now have done itt, but upon this account : When I reflect upon the old kindness betwixt yourself and me, the relation of our families, the necessity of our being neighbours, and how impossible it is to preserve all this upon these terms, I cannot but inform you, and had done itt sooner, but my own indisposition of health and ye difficulty of finding out some witnesses to what is alledged, made me the longer in doing it. Were I conscious to myself that by any loose carriage of mine to you or yours I had deserved thus much, I would have looked upon it as my desert,

\* *Thomas*, eldest son of Thomas Legh of Adlington and Mary, daughter of Thomas Bolles; married Johanna, daughter of Sir John Maynard, Sergeant-at law.

† *Dr. William Shippen* (see p. 79).



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and neer given you this trouble, being free and desirous the same amity may be had as formerly, I give you this account, and hope you will not thinke the worse of me if I take such remedies as the Law will allow, in righting this, and making it known to the world how I have been used."

From his answer to Richard, Dr Shippen evidently considered the letter to be too strong :

" HON<sup>rd</sup> SR

" The next day after I parted with you I went to old Coll Legh. He sayd he had talked with his son and that he disowned any guilt or privitie in that matter and would not acknowledge a fault causelessly. I told ye Old Gentleman that you did not charge his son personally, but his servants, and that his own Groom was as deep as any of them. He said he would not justifie nor protect such servants. Before I could prevail with him to meet you and inspect your Depositions, Mr. Justice Warren \* and Mr Legh † of High Legh interrupted us. I think if you soften some expressions in yr Letter it will do well to send it. I am going abroad, ye journey I told you of, and can no otherwise serve you than in my hearty prayers for yr own and whole Family's prosperitie, which is no lesse desired than that of

" Yr most faythfull Servant,

" W. SHIPPEN."

This unfortunate business caused a coolness between the 1683 neighbours, who were not even on visiting terms for some years ; in fact, there is nothing to show that the cordial relations of former days were ever re-established. A letter of Richard's to his wife, written in 1683 during one of his absences from Lyme, speaks of his having seen " the old Colonel " at a meeting at Stockport, " who begged of Tom Swettenham ‡ to tell me how great a trouble it was to him that I would never call at his house

\* *Warren*, probably John, eldest son of Edward Warren of Poynton (see p. 53). He was one of the King's Council for the Welsh Marches and a Judge of Chester. He married Anne, daughter and heiress of Hugh Cooper, by whom he had several children. He died 1705-6.

† *Legh of High Legh*, probably Henry, born 1611, married the daughter and heiress of Gregory Turner of Marley, Rector of Sefton, Lancashire, or it might be his son, Richard (Earwaker says Henry), who married Mary, daughter of Col. Legh of Adlington by his wife Mary Bolles.

‡ Possibly Thomas Swettenham of Swettenham, aged twenty in 1663; married Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Stanley of Alderley, by whom he had two sons and three daughters. He died 1712.

## LYME LETTERS

nor send to see him. He seemed much transported when Sir John, \* Cos Warren † and I came in."

One gathers from these letters how small and purely local were the interests of the writers' daily lives. Narrow and restricted, of course, was their horizon, but none the less happy their existence. London was very far away with all its happenings, intrigues, conspiracies and affairs of State, in which they could only take a small and very inconspicuous part. Who shall say that these country gentlemen, living on their estates, conducting their county business, administering justice, and each playing his own little part in the orchestral concert of England's greatness and prosperity, was not doing his duty in the best and highest sense of the word? What matter if the paramount questions with them were the draining of some meadow, whether the bay mare had foaled, what likelihood there might be of the year's ploughing producing a better crop, or if the last brew of ale should "miss" or no? There was time and plenty to spare. The hurry and bustle of modern days were unknown to them. Visitors came and stayed weeks instead of hours. The joys and sorrows of their friends and neighbours they made their own, and they loved them for what they *were* and not for what they *had*. Money had not become the god that all men worship now, and vulgarity, self-advertisement and love of display had not become the fashion.

Religion was to these simple souls a living thing, a part of their daily lives, and its teachings were to be accepted and followed with implicit faith and the unfaltering obedience of a little child.

\* Sir John Ardern, Richard's brother-in-law.

† *Warren* (see p. 103).



## CHAPTER XII

### NEWSLETTERS

AMONGST the Legh papers are a quantity of manuscript "news- 1679 letters" covering a period of some hundred and fifty years. As I shall quote freely from these from time to time, it is perhaps as well to explain what they were. Manuscript "newsletters" supplied the place of printed newspapers, which did not exist in England before nearly the middle of the seventeenth century. The writing of these "newsletters" \* was a regular profession, adopted by well-educated and observant men, and was quite distinct from that of the writers of printed news. All leading men and politicians of the day employed these "Intelligencers," who wrote to their patrons every two or three days during their absence from London, and kept them informed of the politics of Europe as well as of "home affairs." The great expense of these periodicals restricted their circulation to the upper classes and the coffee-houses, as the writers charged considerably for their services. Five pounds a year was the amount charged by Muddiman, the great newsletter-writer of the Restoration, and this sum would need to be multiplied five times to arrive at present-day value (pre-War).

These newsletter-writers continued to be employed until nearly the close of the eighteenth century, and long after newspapers had been established and press-licensing had been abolished. The fact that letters were exempt from the very strict system of licensing that existed in relation to all printed matter made these exceptionally valuable, although the writers had to exercise great caution, as letters were frequently opened and read by unauthorized persons and by others than those for whom they were intended. If the press-censorship under the

\* "The Times Tercentenary Handlist of English and Welsh Newspapers, Magazines and Reviews." (British Museum.)

## LYME LETTERS

monarchy was considered strict, it was nothing to what the oppression had been under Cromwell's gentle sway, when the lash was added as a penalty for offending printers.

The manuscript newsletters at Lyme are excellent examples of their kind. They are written on large sheets of paper, those of the seventeenth century being in ordinary big and rather sprawling handwriting. They all begin "Sir," with only "London" and the date at the top of the page, plunging straight into the most important items of news, with no preamble and no signature. The newsletters of the eighteenth century are written in a more commercial hand, with a great many flourishes to the capital letters. Some are written at intervals of two days, some again have gaps between them of many weeks, but as I found them all mixed up with the private letters, arranged in no sort of order, it is quite possible that many were lost.

Although there must have been many earlier ones, the first newsletter preserved at Lyme is of April 8, 1679, and sets forth the reasons why the House of Commons could not agree to the amendments made by the House of Lords in the Bill of Attainder against Danby.

The years 1680 and 1681 proved disastrous ones for Richard and Elizabeth. Two of their children, Anne and Sarah,\* died within a month of each other, probably from neglected colds, and they also lost several dear friends. Lord Ossory,† eldest son of the Duke of Ormonde, is reported as dying of a violent fever at Whitehall, "and is generally lamented," ‡ while the death of Richard's cousin, Lord Cholmondeley,§ took place at 1681 his house at St. James's on July 7, 1681. He was succeeded by his son, Hugh, || who writes to Richard, apologizing for not having

\* See "The House of Lyme," p. 307.

† *Thomas, Earl of Ossory* (1634-80), eldest son of James Butler, first Duke of Ormonde, born in Kilkenny Castle; married, 1659, Emilia, eldest daughter of the Lord of Beverwaert, Governor of Sluys, a kinsman of the Prince of Orange. Lord Ossory had a distinguished career. He is described by Evelyn as "excellent, worthy and noble . . . he deserved all that a sincere friend, a brave soldier, a virtuous courtier, a loyal subject, an honest man, a bountiful master and a good Christian could deserve of his prince and country."

‡ *Lutterell*.

§ *Robert Cholmondeley* of Cholmondeley (see p. 66).

|| Hugh, elder son of the above; he was created Viscount Malpas and Earl of Cholmondeley in 1706. He died unmarried in 1724-5.



## NEWSLETTERS

paid his respects to his dear cousin at Lyme. Sir Thomas Chicheley sends an affectionate letter of condolence to his son-in-law, and expresses his great anxiety to see them all :

“ If God send me health this next summer I will not fail to see you and your wife, with all your brood, which are as dear to me as my life, besides the pleasure of seeing Lyme which is a place I love equal with Wimpole.”

He would have written a chiding letter to Elizabeth for “ making herself sick with eating fruit, but cannot find it in my heart to do so.” Underneath appears in another hand “ hast done it though,” so Elizabeth got her well-merited rebuke after all.

The Monmouth rebellion and the Duke's progress through Cheshire were among the excitements of the autumn of 1682. 1682 Richard would have nothing to do with the reception of the Duke (although he was entertained with great splendour by the Earl of Macclesfield at his house at Gawsworth, only a few miles distant from Lyme) and kept out of the whole business. A newsletter of July 12, 1682, mentions an address being sent up to the King from Lynn, Norfolk, congratulating His Majesty on his escape from “ this horrid Conspiracy ” :

“ All the dissenter's houses there, [in Lynn] were searched for Arms and all ye Arms which were there found were carried to the Town Hall. They add that they have demolished one of the largest and finest Meeting Houses in England. Yesterday one, Mr. Gibbons, a servant of the Duke of Monmouth, was examined by a Committee of Councill, and by them committed to Newgate for refusing to discover where the Duke of Monmouth was concealed, for notwithstanding the hot Report of the Duke of Monmouth taking shipping at Chichester, many are of opinion he is still near, in or about this towne. Yesterday one Mr Flower's house of Hounsley Heath [probably Hounslow] was searched for him.”

On the disgrace of Monmouth many of his preferments were conferred on the Earl of Mulgrave \* through his friendship with James, Duke of York. Mulgrave, however, ventured to raise his eyes to the Princess Anne, for which temerity he was exiled from Court. Lutterell states :

\* *Mulgrave*, John, third Earl (1648-1721), afterwards first Duke of Buckingham and Normanby; he was the patron of Dryden and friend of Pope.

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"The Earl of Mulgrave is fallen into His Majesty's displeasure by pretending Courtship, it is said, to the Lady Anne, and is forbid coming to Whitehall and St James, and hath all his places taken from him."

A contemporary letter to Richard states that :

"since old Lord Mulgrave [he was only 34] and Mr Seymour \* left Whitehall, all humility has left the Court."

On the death of Sir Robert Carr † in November 1682, the post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster fell vacant, and it was straightway conferred upon Sir Thomas Chicheley. This appointment coincided with that of Thomas, Richard's brother, as High Sheriff of Lancashire. Richard was immediately besieged by applicants for the post of private secretary to the new Chancellor, who begged him to plead their cause with his father-in-law. But Sir Thomas intended keeping on his old secretary, Thomas Langley, who had discharged the same office for him during the time that Sir Thomas was Master of the Ordnance. One Guicciardini Wentworth writes to Richard on November 16, 1682 :

"Who succeeds him [Sir Robert Carr] in the place of Chancellor, I need not tell you, who upon my presenting my service, is pleased to tell me he has no use for it, designing to make Mr Langley his secretary."

Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal,‡ whom Richard describes as "an excellent manager of other men's affairs," gives some information relating to Sir Thomas Chicheley's new post "of which," says Richard, "he knows as much as Tom Thumm."§

1683 The King's attitude of mind is well illustrated in a letter from Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal to Richard Legh. Charles' nonchalance and apparent unconcern, which, with the cynical courage he was always able to assume in the face of his greatest dangers, had changed to a mood of sullen thoughtfulness and taciturnity. He saw that he had to do with a people he could neither understand nor manage, and the bitterness of his position

\* *Sir Edward Seymour* (see p. 89).

† *Sir Robert Carr* (see p. 31).

‡ *Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal* (see p. 44).

§ Probably the pseudonym for a dwarf. "Tom Thumb" was the traditional dwarf at King Arthur's court, and a "History of Tom Thumb" was published by Richard Johnson in 1621. These little creatures were not infrequently retained as Court favourites or toys.



## NEWSLETTERS

caused him to lash out to his intimates in private, although in his public demeanour he remained as cool and unruffled as ever :

“ . . . The Sunday before I took leave of him [the king] he bade me tell all his Freinds he would have the laws putt in execution against all dissenters through England ; for he had given liberty so long that they had now almost taken his, and that he could not have common justice with the meanest of his Subjects ; and therefore he wold for the future, as he had ever done, govern by the Lawes, and by them should all his Subjects be governed ; therefore you will doe in yr parts, as it is done in others, and suffer noe Conventicles. I desired His Majesty to let me know his intention as to a Parliament ; he told me he could not, because it depends of actions from abroad ; for if the French King took Luxenburgh or Fell downe into any other part of Flanders, he must be enforced to satisfie his Allies and call a Parliament, otherways he would consider of it ; but such are the unheard of proceedings of that King [Louis XIV] that I expect every post to hear he hath done it ; and I greatly fear that will bring Ruin, for to call a Parliament before men are better settled, I fear will not answer the King's expectation, and then it will much prejudice him at home and more abroad, and I wish this were my opinion alone.” \*

This was the threatened siege of Luxenburgh (or Luxembourg) by which the peace and prosperity of the Low Countries were endangered. The town was taken by the French in 1684, and Evelyn, in his “ Diary,” mentions how, at a dinner at the French Ambassador's, the latter deplored the folly of our politics in suffering the French to take it, “ it being a place of the most concern to have defended, for the interest not only of the Netherlands but of England.”

\* Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal to Richard Legh of Lyme.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE HOSPITALS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

1683 THE Legh family was visited by a severe attack of small-pox in the autumn of 1683 (see "The House of Lyme," p. 316). This horrible illness attacked all the children in turn, ten of them being down with it at the same time, and poor Elizabeth expecting her twelfth baby, which arrived in the middle of the epidemic.

In these enlightened days of medicine and sick-nursing, one can scarcely picture to oneself what a serious visitation of an infectious illness can have meant. Sanitation and hygiene—as we now understand them—were unknown, as were disinfectants. Care of the sick, however, has existed since the earliest times. Although their healing methods were often based on the grossest superstition—medicine being confounded with magic—there was practical nursing of a kind performed amongst the savage races. They all possessed a good knowledge of massage, could dress wounds, apply friction and counter-irritation, and reduce fever with drinks and applications of water, while the inoculation for small-pox had been known to savage tribes from time immemorial.\*

The earliest hospitals in England date from the tenth and eleventh centuries. The Hôtel Dieu of Paris, for many centuries past and to-day one of the famous hospitals of the world, dates, however, from A.D. 650 or 651. The most ancient of our now great and famous hospitals, St. Bartholomew's, richest in historical association, was founded in 1123.

Whatever it may have been in earlier times, it is commonly agreed that, from the latter part of the seventeenth up to the

\* "A History of Nursing," by M. A. Nutting, R.N., and L. Dock, R.N.



# HOSPITALS

middle of the nineteenth century, all improvement in hospitals and institutions had a period of complete stagnation. Ignorance and superstition were widespread. Take, for example, the "King's Touch"—supposed to be a sovereign cure for scrofula, the "King's Evil"; Charles II "touched" some 92,000 sick. The nursing art, the well-being of the patient and the status of the nurses all sank to an indescribable level of degradation. The beds were huge, and all of wood, made to contain four to six patients. They stood in two, three or four rows, small and large mixed up together, so unevenly placed that some could only be reached from the foot, others from the side. Cleaning was impossible. No bed-linen was changed oftener than once a fortnight, body-linen only every four days. There was no centralization. There was a ward for small-pox patients, where they lay four in a bed, which was hung with red curtains—supposed to have a beneficial effect—while the patients wore red gowns. In the other wards, there was no isolation for infectious cases, which were placed indiscriminately with non-contagious diseases.\*

The nurses, with some few exceptions, such as that of Elizabeth Alkins,† the Florence Nightingale of the seventeenth century, were—as a whole—totally uneducated, some of them not even being able to read or write. They knew nothing of science or system. They were recruited from the lowest class, no respectable woman being willing to undertake such work. To obtain a sober set of nurses was as much as any institution could expect. The only testimonials required were an ordinary character for sobriety, cleanliness, morality and general respectability. Their wages were 6s. to 8s. a week, the hours cruelly long, one nurse to every ten patients by day and one to every twenty at night.

If such conditions existed in the hospitals and public institutions, what must they have been in the private houses! The sick were there attended by parents, relatives, servants, or some

\* "A History of Nursing," by M. A. Nutting, R.N., and L. Dock, R.N.

† The history of her life has been charmingly written by Mr. G. E. Manwaring of the London Library.

## LYME LETTERS

old wise woman from the neighbouring village, whose ignorance was as signal as her incapacity. The chief remedies employed by the doctors were bleeding, cupping or blistering, while their pharmacopœia consisted of such ingredients as Jesuits' powder (quinine) and nux vomica, or the application of a live pigeon cut in two. Fresh air in a sick room to them meant sudden death.

Surprising to relate, all the Legh children made good recoveries with the exception of Betty, the second daughter, who was in a delicate state of health for some time after her attack. Lady Chicheley alludes to this fact in a letter to Elizabeth, written from London in the autumn of 1683, after her return from taking the waters at Tunbridge Wells. She suggests that the girl should have a change of air, offering her "own little house in the Square" and begging to be allowed to take charge of her niece for a time :

"Pray thank Mr Legh for his letter, but tell him too that he is too selfich to be so fond of all his Daughters as to part with none. Sir John saith you will all thinke Betty well enough till you see her drop down dead which God forbid, and I hope better. Pray give him the enclosed for his entertainment, tho' I am a little upon puffs nagg with him." \*

Sir John Chicheley adds his entreaties to his wife's that Betty may be sent up to them in London; the girl was evidently far more ill than her parents were aware of :

"I feare all ye tricks you can do with your daughter Betty will never be effectual, and in case change of aire Cannot establish her health, nothing I feare will do; therefore I have already made you an offer of my little house in ye Square, and Do desire againe yt you'l send her to us, yt such meanes may be used as is necessary."

Sir Thomas Chicheley also petitions for his grand-daughter's company :

"I pray God blesse them all, [the children] and that they may be great comforts to you and their Mother, the which I am confident they will, for they are very good, so good that I could wish you would let us have Lettice and Betty with us at London this winter. I writ this in earnest, therefore pray let it be so if you can possibly spair them."

\* I have had great difficulty in ascertaining the meaning of this expression. A correspondent to "Notes and Queries" suggests that this may mean "somewhat annoyed or offended with."



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Betty, however, was not sent up to stay with her aunt and uncle, and did not get her much-needed change of air until the following July 1684, when she accompanied her mother to London, Elizabeth going up to consult an oculist.

Lady Chicheley reports an accident to herself during her journey from Tunbridge Wells, when her coachman having, as Sir John expressed it, "taken leave of his Friends somewhat more than he ought to have done, made shift to overturn the Coach."

"DEAR SISTER," she writes,

"I would sooner have writ to you but that a Tunbridge life is allowable to be lazy, which I hope you comply with also. However none of your Friends I am sure hath more rejoyced in your happiness then myself in hearing of the safe recovery of all your Daughters, God in Heaven prosper your sons as well. Sir Thomas will not come to towne yet this 3 weeks, however will not lett me take any more journies this yeare, my Coachman having got wine with his water at the Wells the last day to take leave, turned me over coming from the Wells to our lodgings, but God be thank't without any apparent harm as yett, so he and Sir John are unwilling I should venture another journey, but Sir Thomas sent to me himself not to come, or I believe I might have ventured again."

These accidents were of somewhat frequent occurrence, often resulting in very serious consequences to the occupants of the heavy coaches of the day. Lady Chicheley was expecting the arrival of a baby, so it is not surprising that neither her husband nor her father-in-law were anxious for her to run the risk of another journey.

Sir Thomas Chicheley's affairs were in a very unsatisfactory state. It was more and more apparent that he would have ere long to make the sacrifice that many a family in England is having to face at the present day, with brave but breaking hearts, the parting with a beloved and beautiful home. The upkeep of Wimpole, the place he had built and created, was now, largely owing to his past great extravagance, quite beyond his means, and the home, with all its cherished memories of his youth and happy bygone days, was soon to pass into the hands of strangers. Lady Chicheley writes on the subject to her brother-

## LYME LETTERS

in-law, Richard Legh at Lyme, her letter dated from London, October 9, 1683 :

“ I had yesterday a very doleful letter from Mrs Langley \* upon the old matters of Sir Thomas’s misfortunes and necessities how her poor husband is forced to come to London to stope great gaps and that Sir Tho: hath soe much to pay when he comes to towne that she dreads the consequence of it. I am sure this letter made Sir John’s heart very heavy for severall reasons and his journey I doubt but melancholy. He told me he always takes his last leave when he leaves that place, never expecting to come againe, and I know not what to thinke now by her writing. Pray take no notice of what I have written to any this way except myselfe, who want you to talke with one hour about such matters. I wish the good man [her father-in-law, Sir Thomas] is not overcome to doe things in his age by necessity and persuasion that is contrary to his natural temper.”

Had the Chicheley family consented to pool their resources and all live together at Wimpole the place might have been saved. Sir John, however, does not seem to have cared to forgo all the pleasures of the Court and society in London, and settle down to the life of a country gentleman, any more than his father—with all his love for the place—had wished to do twenty-five years earlier. Mrs. Fountaine expresses herself somewhat strongly on the subject in a letter to Richard of about this date :

“ Wimpole looks sweetly, and the old gentleman [her father, Sir Thomas Chicheley] and I had a deal of discourse about people that might and would not live there; they ought to be beaten. If there was not a woman in the case, somebody else that would goe should I believe, but my father says he will go every summer for as long as he can. My brother John thinks (my father says) there is nothing to be done without 3 or 4 thousand pd in his pocket, and therefore would be going to the Straights again to get it for 2 or 3 years; but my father says rather than soe, hee had best goe to Cheshire to you and stay as long; and he’l undertake they Cannot spend above 4 hundred a year, and then they will lay up a thousand a year, for they have 14 hundred Coming in well paid, her 8, his 4 of my father and 2 as a flag officer duely paid; Yet for all this he grumbles so that people hath Come to him [this “ him ” means Sir Thomas] and thought he had not allowed him a

\* Housekeeper to the Chicheleys; her husband, Thomas Langley, was private secretary to Sir Thomas.





MRS. SARAH FOUNTAINE

*From a Painting at Lyme*





## HOSPITALS

grote; and Tom and his wife Laughs and says if they had the world they would not be sattisfied, but poor woman, she is Content and would live at Wimpole. All the reason he gives he will not, is that he knows not how soon hee may be turned out againe if my father dyes, but methinks what soe good a father thinks fitting, children should willingly submit to; but I hope these things will keepe from the old gentleman's hart, and then noe matter."

She seldom writes without mentioning her disagreeable husband, with whom she led a most unhappy life, although her pluck and determination to make the best of things helped to render her existence endurable:

"Mr Fountaine went away that morning I went to Wimpole, in a mighty good humour, and I believe it will Continue for he writes kindly. I Cannot faine anything well but I must cry rost meat \* to thee because I dare swear you are glad of itt. I wish I was with you, for Tunbridge waters hath washed away a great many dolefull thoughts from my heart."

In December 1683 her three children caught the small-pox,

"the eldest boy pretty well, but the girl is mighty full, but we hope in no danger."

The children all recovered; the eldest boy became afterwards Sir Andrew Fountaine, a very distinguished antiquary and one of the most celebrated connoisseurs of his day. He succeeded Sir Isaac Newton as Governor of the Mint, and was Chamberlain to Queen Caroline.

The Lyme red deer were still as famous and as much sought after as they had been in old Sir Peter Legh's day, when several of the great deer-parks, Chatsworth, Knowsley, etc., were partly stocked with stags and hinds from Lyme (see "The House of Lyme," p. 85). In October 1683 Richard, second Lord Herbert of Cherbury, writes to his cousin Richard Legh of Lyme from Montgomery Castle:

\* According to a correspondent in "Notes and Queries," Mr. S. Butterworth, to "cry roast meat" means to proclaim one's prosperity or success. Farmer and Henley's "Dictionary of Slang" (abridged edition, 1905, p. 377), gives the interpretation of this phrase as "to chatter about one's good fortune." For this information I have to thank Mr. A. C. Coldicott of Beaudesert, Henley-in-Arden.—E. N.

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“HONOURED COSEN,

“My alliance unto you by my wife entitles mee to that appellation, and the great obligations I rec<sup>d</sup> from my Unckle Sir Peeter Llee in his tyme, giues mee reason to believe I may be taken (as I am) a Relatiue to that famely, which will make this bould addresse the lesse strange and myselfe not the worse thought on, To begge the favour of you, you would please to bestow upon mee two Brace of Store-Female-Red-Deer and a Male-Deere; I have empayled a ground high enough to keepe that game. But where I was promis’d a large proportion of Deere to store it, by an unhappy accident I am disappoynted.”

He begs to know if a stag called after him be still in Lyme Park or how long he lived if he be dead?

The relationship of which Lord Herbert speaks can only be described as remote, his wife, Mary, being a daughter of John, second Earl of Bridgewater, who was a nephew of old Sir Peter Legh’s second wife, Dorothy Egerton of Ridley. Under the circumstances it seems strange that Lord Herbert should have cared to ask any favour from Richard Legh, his (Lord Herbert’s) first cousin—one Brown—having killed in a duel, in 1641–2, Richard’s first cousin, Peter Legh of Lyme (heir to his grandfather old Sir Peter Legh of Lyme), whereby the direct succession to the Lyme estates was broken for the first time for many centuries. Edward,\* first Lord Herbert of Cherbury (the father of Richard’s correspondent), refers to this tragedy in his Autobiography, and mentions the fact as an achievement redounding to the credit of his nephew, worthy to be recorded in his family history :

“Frances, my youngest sister was married to Sir John Brown Knt of the county of Lincoln, who had by her divers children, the eldest of whom, although young, fought divers duels, in one of which *it was his fortune* to kill one Lee of a great family in Lancashire.” (See “The House of Lyme,” p. 175.)

Richard was proverbially good-natured, and Lord Herbert, no doubt, received the red deer and the information he desired.

A similar request comes this same year from William Went-

\* Born 1581, married Mary, daughter and heir of Sir William Herbert of St. Gillians in the county of Monmouth, by whom he had seven sons and three daughters. He was the author of various works, including his celebrated Autobiography. He died 1648.



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worth, second Earl of Strafford (eldest son of Thomas, first Earl, beheaded in 1641), who begs the favour of some red deer :

“Hearing you have great plenty, I presume to desire y<sup>e</sup> favour of you to be a benefactor to me for my Parke in Yorkshire, where I should be glad to see something a handsome show of them y<sup>e</sup> soonest I could. I hope you will be pleased to pardon this freedome I take and if I may in anything return my service to you I shall w<sup>th</sup> a greater readiness performe it.

“Your very affectionate & humble Servant,

“STRAFFORDE.”

Every year large quantities of venison were despatched to friends and neighbours—haunches and forequarters—accompanied by kind messages of friendship and goodwill. In a letter to one of his neighbours Richard says :

“You eat venison so heartily at Stockport that I cannot forbear sending you half a Buck at this time.”

The table-manners of the day being somewhat unrefined, one can picture the gormandizer, with voracious appetite and in enormous mouthfuls, devouring the delicacy with his knife and fingers, forks being seldom seen until later in the century.

## CHAPTER XIV

### PLOTS AND COUNTER PLOTS

1683 A Thanksgiving Service was held in London in September 1683 to commemorate the preservation of Charles II from the Rye House Plot. Much excitement was caused in St. Olave's Church, Southwark, on this auspicious occasion, owing to the fact of a paper being handed to the officiating minister during the service, purporting to contain the name of some sick person for whom prayers were desired. The paper contained, however, the following lines :

“ You Hippocrates leave off your Pranckes  
To murther men and then give thanks  
Forbear your Tricks, pursue no further,  
For God accepts no thanks for murther.”

The minister immediately sent the paper to Justice Pyers, but although several different names were mentioned as the possible author of the poem, I am not aware that he was ever discovered.

With all the plots and counter-plots of the day there were of course many arrests and imprisonments, sometimes of quite innocent persons, guilty perhaps of nothing more than an incautious word, taken up by some mischief-maker, and distorted into high treason. A certain Mr. Broom Whorewood, M.P. for the City of Oxford, was one of the victims, committed in September 1683 for “ dangerous words.” The circumstances, according to a manuscript preserved at Lyme, were as follows :

Mr. Whorewood, not finding his servants at work on January 30, inquired of them the reason why. They replied that this date, January 30, was a public fast. “ And why,” Mr. Whorewood was reported to have asked, “ should the 30th of January be a public fast-day any more than the 28th or 29th ? ” He was



## PLOTS AND COUNTER PLOTS

told it was because of the martyrdom of the late King. Mr. Whorewood was then said to have replied in coarse terms that if *this* King had been served as his father was "it had been the better for us all." How Mr. Whorewood was punished does not appear.

The greatest precautions were being taken to insure the safety of the King and Royal Family. A letter from Richard Legh of Adlington,\* son of Richard Legh of Lyme's old friend and neighbour, written on March 13, 1683, mentions his being quartered with his regiment at Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire, close to the house of Rumbold the conspirator, a maltster at the Rye House and much concerned in the famous plot. Richard Legh of Adlington was detailed to escort the King and other members of the Royal Family on their journeys to and from Newmarket.

"We are quartered in Hodsdon, within a little mile of Rumbell's † house, though the King nor none of the Royal Family has come this road, but over Epping Forest, yet we are ordered over night to bring parties to conduct them betwixt the Green Man and Bishop's Stafford [Stortford]. Upon Tuesday last was sevenight I had the honor to command 2 parties for the Duke ‡ and Prince; we had good way but hard riding; we expect them all back upon Saturday come sevenight."

This was only a week or two before the design against the King's life was to have been attempted, the date being fixed for some day in April. By an accident, Charles escaped the fate prepared for him. A fire having broken out in the King's Palace at Newmarket, Charles and his brother returned to London two days earlier than originally intended, thereby defeating the plans of the conspirators, the plot being revealed by one of their number the following June.

\* Richard, sixth son of Thomas Legh of Adlington by his wife Mary, daughter and heiress of Thomas Bolles of Osberton, Notts, born 1653, was in the army and fought at Sedgemoor. He was a godson of Richard Legh's and frequently corresponded with him. He inherited the Clumber estates, probably through his mother.

† Probably Rumbold (1622?-85), a conspirator; he carried on the trade of maltster at Rye House, Hertfordshire; was indicted of high treason for complicity in the Rye House Plot in 1683; fled to Holland; he was captain of a horse regiment in Argyll's expedition to Scotland in 1685, and was captured and executed.

‡ The Duke of York, afterwards James II.

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The calling up of the Militia was now decided upon, and Lord Derby,\* as Lord-Lieutenant of the county, sent out a circular letter to Richard Legh and others of the Deputy-Lieutenants, bidding them to issue orders for meetings to be held and for a general muster to be called. From the original manuscript letter preserved at Lyme, it is interesting to note the formula that was adopted, the same letter of instructions being forwarded from one Deputy-Lieutenant to another, duly endorsed and signed by each recipient :

1684

“ April 28th, 1684.

“ MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN :

“ The latter end of the next moneth will bee a fit time for the meeting of the Militia of your County, I desire you therefore to issue out the necessary orders for the exercising of the particular troopes & Companies on such daies & at such places as you thinke convenient, and alsoe for a General Muster, observing the powers given you by the seuerall Acts of parliament for ordering the said forces,

“ I am, My Lord & Gentlemen,

“ Yr affte freind and servant

“ DERBY.”

The signature only is in Lord Derby's own hand.

Sir Philip Egerton,† apparently, was the first recipient, he sending the paper on to Lord Kilmorey,‡ who endorsed it at the top,

“ Rec<sup>d</sup> from Sir Phil: Egerton, 11 a clock May 1st, sent immediately to Peter Wilbraham of Dartford § [Dorfold] Esq.

KILMOREY.”

Peter Wilbraham received the missive on May 5th,

“ Received from my Lord Kilmorey May 5th in ye evening & sent it away to Sir Robert Leicester Bart.||

“ P. WILBRAHAM.”

\* Lord Derby was also Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire, an office held by Edward, third Earl, and almost ever since by successive holders of that title.

† *Egerton of Oulton*, Sir Philip, third son of Sir Rowland Egerton of Egerton and Oulton; married Catherine, daughter and sole heir of Piers Conway of Hendre, Flint, by whom he had a large family.

‡ *Kilmorey*, Thomas, sixth Viscount; married 1679, Frances, daughter and heir of Francis Leveson Fowler of Harnage Grange, Salop, by Anne his wife, a daughter of old Peter Venables, Baron of Kinderton, by his second wife, Frances Cholmondeley.

§ *Wilbraham of Dorfold*, Peter, born 1626; married Mary, daughter of Thomas Stanley of Alderley, by whom he had five sons.

|| *Leicester of Tabley*, Sir Robert, eldest son of Sir Peter Leicester of Tabley,



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From Sir Robert Leicester it was sent on to Richard Legh at Lyme, a distance of about twenty-five miles :

“Received from Peter Wilbraham Esqr May 6th & sent to Richard Legh of Lime Esqr.

“ROBERT LEICESTER.”

Richard dispatching it on to his brother-in-law, Sir John Ardern ; \* at Harden, Stockport, about eight or nine miles off :

“Rec<sup>d</sup> from Sir Robt Lei: late upon May 6th & delivered to Sr John Ardern May ye 7th by R. Legh.”

Although it is generally supposed that the penalty for the committing of trifling offences was excessive in former times, the punishment for atrocious crimes was—on the other hand—far more adequate than it is in these cultured days when the worst offences are often treated a great deal too lightly. Richard reports that, at the assizes, a man who had attempted an assault upon a child, was sentenced to stand on the pillory at Macclesfield, Congleton and Stockport, and to be imprisoned for three years.

It is rather interesting to gather from a letter of about this date how the sale of an annuity was carried out. Apparently this could be done as a speculation by well-to-do private individuals, who would pay a yearly sum to the annuitant in exchange for so much money down, much as an Insurance office sells an annuity at the present day. Richard Legh was to receive from Mrs. Langley, housekeeper to the Chicheleys, the sum of £750, on receipt of which he was to assure to her and her husband a yearly sum of £60 during their joint lives, Richard retaining the capital for good and all. Whether this was a profitable transaction or not would depend on (1) the age of the annuitants (which does not appear), (2) the rate of interest current at the time. Richard was a very good man of business and probably lost no money over the speculation. In a letter to Elizabeth Legh Mrs. Langley mentions the matter :

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the great Antiquary; born 1643; married Meriel, daughter of Francis Watson of Church Aston, Salop, by whom he had, with other issue, Francis (afterwards Sir Francis) the life-long friend and correspondent of Peter Legh of Lyme, eldest son of Richard.

\* Ardern of Harden, Stockport (see p. 65).

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“ We return our humble thankes and are very willing to give the money Mr. Legh mentioned, for I had ten thousand times rather have it of Mr Legh then of anybody else, and though 'tis a good sum to give 750l for both our lives, 'tis better to us then the money, for we have nobody to provide for but ourselves, and which of us soever lives longest sixty pounds a yeare will be better to us well secured then the money, and when 'tis done and settled, I shall look upon it as one of the greatest blessings of my life, and if it please God I dye never soe soon I shall rejoyce I leave the money in this good family. I call in some money my Master [Sir Thomas Chicheley] owes me to make this purchase so that hee must sett the time when the money will be payd and intended to write to Mr. Legh this post, but he [Sir Thomas] was up betimes in the morning and went to Hampton Court to the Counsell there, and returned to dinner, so is weary and cannot write, but will by the next.”

It seems fairly probable that Richard did not do badly over the transaction.

There was evidently a very severe outbreak of influenza all over England in the summer of 1684; eighteen persons in one family are reported as being down with the complaint; sixteen in Lady Brooke's \* household, and twelve persons incapacitated in another; great difficulty was experienced in getting in the harvest owing to the scarcity of reapers :

“ The country people hereabouts are so sicke they want Reapers, and give extraordinary rates—such as was never known in these parts for those that can worke.”

In August 1684 occurred the death of Sir George Booth,† first Lord Delamere. Apparently his loss was not much lamented by his widow. Richard Legh visited her on his way from Lyme to Haydock, Lancashire, and although usually so charitable and good-natured, has some rather spiteful comments to make on her

\* Sister of Richard, wife of Sir Richard Brooke of Norton, Cheshire.

† *Sir George Booth*, first Lord Delamere (1622–84), descended from a younger branch of the Booths of Dunham Massay, Cheshire. He took the Parliamentary side in the Civil War, but entered the plot for restoring Charles II in 1659, and was raised to the peerage at the Restoration. He married first Lady Caroline Clinton, daughter and co-heir of Theophilus, Earl of Lincoln, by whom he had an only daughter. His second wife was Lady Elizabeth Grey, eldest daughter of Henry, Earl of Stamford, by whom he had seven sons and five daughters.



## PLOTS AND COUNTER PLOTS

character and demeanour in a letter to Elizabeth (staying with her brother in London), written on August 10 :

“ Haydock.

“ MY DEAREST,

“ Yesterday I came hither and left all well at Lime. As I passed by Dunham I sent in a compliment to the fair Lady there, who takes her loss very patiently, but whether like a good Christian or noe, I kno' not. She hath long waited for this, and the last time I saw her I thought it was like a Raven that sate cawing over a sicke horse ; how she will manage her joy a little, time will show ; some says she will disparke both Dunham and Bollen unless her Son come well off and will give more than they are worth. As I came through Warrington Mr. Goulborne way-laid me and I dined with him, and a confidant of theirs at Dunham whispered one in the eare and said it was believed that the match with Delavall wold goe off,\* for his Estate did not answer expectation. Some doe not stick to say that the Lady hath good store of money and plate and other good things to dispose of, and she will thrust all she can upon the young Lord. This is the freshest news we have and I am willing to write anything that will make mine acceptable to thee.”

Sir John Chicheley, in a letter to Richard of November 4, 1684, reports a disastrous fire as taking place in London, and Lord Powis' † house at the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields and Great Queen Street being totally destroyed. Two pages were burnt to death, and the other occupants narrowly escaped the same fate :

“ What you heard of Lord Powis' house being burnt was true, as also yt of his Page and Mr Gerald's being lost in ye fire. 'Twas ye house where Lady Savile lived before Sir Thomas married her at ye corner of Lincoln' Inn Fields—next Queen Street.”

This beautiful house, now divided into two, numbers 66 and 67 Lincoln's Inn Fields, was built about 1641 or the early part

\* The match *did* come off. Diana, youngest daughter of Lord Delamere by his second wife, married Sir Ralph Delavall of Seaton Delavall, Northumberland ; after his death she married, secondly, Sir Edward Blackett of Newby, Yorkshire.

† *Powis*, William Herbert, First Marquis and titular Duke of Powis (1617-96), was imprisoned in connection with the Popish Plot, 1679-84. His estates were confiscated and he died in exile at St. Germain.

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of 1642, by the then Earl of Carlisle,\* who purchased † the plot of ground on which it stands in 1641, when no time, apparently, was lost in its erection. Lord Carlisle was evidently in possession of the house in 1644, as, in March of that year, a burglary had taken place at "the house of the Rt. Hon. James, Earl of Carlisle (scituate in Lincolns Inne Feildes)." ‡ Lord Carlisle's occupation of the house must have continued up to 1652, when it probably came into the possession of Sir George Savile, afterwards first Marquis of Halifax. The above letter speaks of his mother, Anne Lady Savile, living there before her marriage to Mr. (afterwards Sir Thomas) Chicheley, which marriage must have taken place in 1655.

Sir George Savile's § ownership lasted until after 1670, when his first wife's death took place in the December of that year.

The new Powis House was designed by Captain William Winde, and was used as the official residence of the Keeper of the Great Seal. It passed successively into the possession of the Dukes of Newcastle, and, after belonging to various other owners, it descended (part of it at least), for about fifty years, to becoming the headquarters of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. Internally there are no distinctive features which can with certainty be ascribed to the seventeenth century, with the exception, perhaps, of a beautiful carved marble chimney-piece, formerly in one of the rooms on the second floor, but now moved down to a front room on the ground floor.

How are the mighty fallen ! Hideous Teal grates replace the Charles II fireplaces. Ground-glass electric light burners hang from the beautiful ceilings. Iron safes, modern bookcases and piles of tin boxes are ranged against the panelled walls of the spacious rooms, once hung with gorgeous tapestries and filled with the priceless furniture of other days. The atmosphere is redolent

\* *Carlisle*, James Hay, First Earl; Master of the Wardrobe, 1631; married Lucy, daughter of Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland; she was a noted wit and beauty and was praised by Sir John Suckling, Davenant, etc. She died 1660. The Dic. Nat. Bio. gives his death as taking place in 1636, which is manifestly impossible, as he built his house in Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1641, and was living there up to 1652.

† "Middlesea Sessions Rolls III," p. 178.

‡ "Survey of London" (St. Giles').

§ See p. 6.



## PLOTS AND COUNTER PLOTS

of dust and musty papers. Gone is the calm and gracious stillness of long ago. This abode, once the scene of grandeur and magnificence, where the most princely hospitality was dispensed, is transformed into a busy office,\* and through the old corridors, where once paced courtly gallants and stately dames, messengers and office-boys now hurry to and fro.

\* The house has been for many years occupied by the firm of Messrs. Farrer & Co., solicitors. Mr. Farrer himself most courteously showed me round the house, which has been in the possession of his family for (I think) over one hundred years.—  
E. N.

## CHAPTER XV

### JAMES II AND THE CHICHELEYS

ALTHOUGH the sale of Wimpole was not completed before 1686, the transactions were proceeding in 1684, and poor Sir Thomas Chicheley was proportionately depressed, but nevertheless bearing up bravely against his misfortunes.

“ ’Tis almost a miracle to see so much evenness of temper and patience,”

Lady Chicheley reports in November 1684.

1685

The Legh family was much in favour with the new King, and one of the first acts of James II—after his accession—was to name young Peter Legh \* (elected M.P. for the borough of Newton at the age of sixteen in 1685) to some post or other. Lord Derby,† in the following letter, expresses great pleasure at being the means of transmitting the welcome news to the boy’s father at Lyme :

“ Knowsley, 20 Feb. 1684-5.

“ SR,

“ . . . I have received commands from His Majesty to put in Mr. Legh of Lime Junior in ye room of young Coll: Legh of Adlington.‡ I mention this to giue my self opportunity of assuring you I am very well pleased with it. I am only concerned I did not do it myself, but I desire you to believe I did not know how acceptable it would be, for, till after I received it, I was ignorant yt any of yr family had been so before. Pray pardon all these blots and believe me to be with g<sup>t</sup> truth

“ Yr aff<sup>t</sup> freind and faithfull servant,

“ DERBY.

“ My service to all at Lime.”

\* See “ The House of Lyme,” p. 330.

† *Derby*, William, ninth Earl (see p. 68).

‡ *Legh of Adlington*, Thomas, eldest son of Thomas Legh of Adlington (see p. 102).



## JAMES II AND CHICHELEYS

The accession of the new King was greeted with much enthusiasm.

“The King is well, whom God Almighty long continue, and governs with great discretion and wisdom,”

a correspondent writes to Richard at Lyme on March 7, 1684-5.

“Great and chearfull are the preparations for St George’s Day both for the Procession, fireworks and other triumphs. Our old Tower and garrison never roared yet as it will doe then,”

Frank Smith reports from The Tower on March 31.

Sir John Chicheley had great hopes that the new King, whom as Duke of York he had known so intimately and been thrown with so constantly, would not forget his old servant. Nor did he. Writing on February 19, 1684-5, Sir John Chicheley mentions some of the new appointments, and his anticipation, from the King’s demeanour, of His Majesty’s favourable consideration in his own case :

“The Privy Seale given to ye Lord Clarendon,\* and Lord Halifax † [his half-brother] made Lord President of ye Council, by choice, I am told, and not otherwise, wch I am glad to heare, he being able to do his Majesty good service in Parliament. If I mistake not, I told you in my last yt Lord Rochester ‡ had ye White Staffe given him. ’Tis said ye Duke of Beaufort § is in treaty with Lord Dartmouth || for ye Master of ye Horse’s place.”

He speaks also of his own concerns and the kind reception accorded him by the King :

“Since my last I have had some talke with His Majesty in reference to my owne concerne, who was very Gracious and kind in his expressions to me, God send I may speedily find ye good effects of them.”

\* *Clarendon*, Henry Hyde, second Earl (1628-1700), private secretary and chamberlain to Queen Catherine; married first, Theodosia, daughter of Arthur Lord Capel (beheaded by the rebels), secondly Flower, daughter and heiress of William Backhouse of Swallowfield, Berkshire, and widow of Sir William Backhouse.

† *Halifax*, Sir George Savile, first Marquis, see note, p. 29.

‡ *Rochester*, Laurence Hyde, second son of the first Earl of Clarendon; was Lord High Treasurer and K.G.; ambassador to Holland in 1685; married Lady Henrietta, daughter of Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, by whom he had one son.

§ *Beaufort*, Henry Somerset, first Duke (see p. 89).

|| *Dartmouth*, George Legge, first Baron (see p. 80).

## LYME LETTERS

Sir Thomas Chicheley was exceedingly annoyed at the appointment of young Mr. Shakerley ‡ to be Sheriff of Lancashire, and vents his ill-humour in a letter to his son-in-law :

“The King hath appointed Mr. Shakerley, who is I think one of the troublesomest impertinent Coxcombs that ever I met with, and now he is Sheriff he thinks himself the greatest man in England and thinks that I and all the officers are his servants. . . . I think he is as fit a subject for a staige as ever I did see.”

Great rejoicings were to take place at Stockport to celebrate the new King's accession. Richard was inaugurating a grand banquet for the occasion :

“I was yesterday at Stockport,” his old friend and neighbour Edward Warren of Poynton § writes on April 1, 1685,

“and did speak for a good dinner at Robinson's of fish and fleshe, which he says he will take care to provide against Friday—the day Sr John Arderne \* and you have—it seems—appointed.”

This was to be preceded by a service of thanksgiving in the church and a sermon,

“if you thinke fit? I have spoken to one to provide fuell for a bonefyer, but it being Market-Day and the Market-place full of Stalls and Standings, the Fier cannot well be made there until 4 o'clock, but if it be made on the Castle Hill in the midst thereof, and the gates sett open, it will appear to the people in the Markett, and the fier may then be made ready for us, who have been at the Churche, to go unto, when we have done our devotions, and from thence go to Robinson's to our dinner. As you please to direct the fier shall be made, either in the Market-place or Castle Hill.”

A newsletter of about this date, May 12, 1685, preserved at Lyme, gives a short account of the King being out stag-hunting and not returning till the early hours of the next morning, thereby causing the Queen and Court much uneasiness :

‡ *Shakerley*, Peter, eldest son of Sir Geoffrey Shakerley, Governor of Chester Castle, by his first wife Katherine Pennington; he was made Sheriff of Lancashire in 1684; he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Mainwaring of Over Peover, Cheshire, but had no children. He was ultimately made Governor of Chester Castle, as his father had been before him.

§ *Edward Warren* of Poynton (see p. 53).

\* *Sir John Arderne* of Harden, Cheshire, Richard's brother-in-law (see p. 65).



## JAMES II AND CHICHELEYS

“On Saturday His Majesty was a Staggh-hunting and did not return till Sunday morning about one of ye Clock, which occasioned no small uneasiness to ye Queen and ye whole Court, but blessed be God, he returned in good health. The reason of his Stay was the Staggh was not killed till 9 a clock at night and that 25 miles off.”

A Tory Government was elected by an enormous majority in May 1685. This was partly owing to the remodelled corporations returning Tory members, but still more because the feeling of the country was strongly in James II's favour. Sir Thomas Chicheley had been chosen and returned burgess for the borough of Cambridge and also for the borough of Preston, Lancashire, but he made his selection to serve for his old constituency of Cambridge. There were many applicants for the Preston seat, and both Richard and his father-in-law were being canvassed to give their “recommendation” to some would-be candidate.

“He must be a right good man and one of interest in the country,” and Richard was begged to act “with all ye privacy you can.”

Although the Chicheley family seem to have been much in the good graces of James II whilst he was Duke of York, poor Sir Thomas's misfortunes all seem to date from the accession of the new King. Charles II had always befriended him and never missed an opportunity of doing him a good turn.

James II, like the late King, was much influenced by those who had nearest access to him. Of these personages a very conspicuous one was George Legge,\* first Baron Dartmouth, who, through his intimacy with the Duke of York had—as we have seen—in 1682 ousted Sir John Chicheley † from his post of Master of the Ordnance. Sir Thomas Chicheley suffered also from the enmity of this great man, when he lost both his post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster ‡ (to which he had been appointed in 1682 after the death of Sir Robert Carr, and had held for some years), and the Governorship of the

\* See p. 80.

† See p. 80.

‡ His name does not appear in the list of Chancellors of the Duchy of Lancaster, but we know from the letters that he occupied this post for at least four years.

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Tower, which Lord Dartmouth obtained for himself in 1686. Sir Thomas had also hopes of some Court appointment, but his application for this was rejected.

“Whilst he has so great an enemy as ye Lord Dartmouth,” writes Richard to one of his cousins in 1684-5,

“there is small hopes for him, poor man, he must sink under his burthen.”

Commenting upon the removal of the Duke of Ormonde\* from the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, which took place in 1685, after the accession of James II, Henry Hyde, second Earl of Clarendon,† being appointed in his place, Sir Thomas Chicheley compares his own hard usage with that of the great man :

“When I see how that honourable good man my Lord of Ormonde is used, I hope I shall passe by my usage with great ease and follow the example of a man that had got a Neat’s tongue ‡ in one hand and a piece of bread in the other, and went up and down the towne and told everybody he held his tongue and eat his bread.”

Sir Thomas had a difficult character. He was very selfish, and this defect was no doubt intensified by his having had two adoring wives who made his will their law and knew no other. Although devotedly attached to all his children he never suffered himself to be influenced by them in any particular. He resented the slightest criticism or interference, was extremely reticent and reserved about his own affairs, never discussing them with any of his family or friends, and, although a hopelessly indifferent man of business, he sought neither help nor advice from anyone :

“Sir Thomas Chicheley,” § writes his daughter-in-law to some friend a few years later,

“is a man most niceley to be dealt with by his children, never communicates any of his affairs with or to them, nor suffers them to speake to him ; otherwise to my knowledge his affaires might have beene in a much better condition then now they are.”

\* *Ormonde*, Duke of (see p. 65).

† *Clarendon*, second Earl (1638-1709), eldest son of Edward, first Earl ; private secretary and chamberlain to Queen Catherine ; opposed the settlement of the Crown on William and Mary ; imprisoned in the Tower in 1690.

‡ A neat’s tongue—an ox-tongue.

§ Savile and Finch Correspondence, 1626-1720. Egerton MSS., British Museum,



## JAMES II AND CHICHELEYS

She goes on to give an ill-natured piece of information respecting a neighbour, Sir John Egerton of Egerton, who had just introduced his second wife—Alice Wolferton—to the county :

“ On Sunday last I saw Sr John Edgerton and his faire lady at church, who is a very country clode and dresses accordingly. I daresay nobody envys her or him, for to me they are well matcht.”

Lady Calveley,\* Richard's very exacting and tiresome old aunt, had occasionally to be propitiated with presents and other little attentions, although in this respect Richard was far less assiduous than were her other relations. The following letter to the old lady, containing the offer of an easy-chair, he had written out as a rough copy for Elizabeth to send, her spelling being too erratic to admit of her corresponding unaided with important relatives :

“ HONRD MADAM,

“ Since Mr. Legh hath been very busy with his Joyner to get your Scriptorie † ready, I thought it was not good manners in me to be idle. Therefore make bold to present you w<sup>th</sup> an easy chair herew<sup>th</sup> sent, being well assured it is more for yr health to sleep in after meales than to ly downe ; I beg yr La<sup>sp</sup> will accept the good will I have to serve y<sup>u</sup>, being under the deepest obligacon bound thereunto, who am,

“ Dear Madam,

“ Yr most obedient Neece & most humble ser<sup>t</sup>

“ E. L.”

The Parliamentary Whigs had brought themselves much into disrepute through the discovery of the Rye House Plot, in which many of their number were involved, and the Monmouth Rebellion, brought to an end by the Duke's defeat at Sedgemoor on July 6, 1685, and his execution nine days later. Amongst those concerned in both these enterprises were intimate friends of the Leghs, including Lord Delamere ‡ and Lord Brandon,§

\* See p. 66.

† A sort of writing bureau.

‡ *Delamere*, Henry Boothe, second Baron and first Earl of Warrington (1652–1694), eldest surviving son of Sir George Boothe, first Baron, by his second wife, Elizabeth Grey, daughter of Henry Earl of Stamford. He opposed the attempt of Charles II to strengthen the Royal Prerogative. Was imprisoned in the Tower on suspicion of being concerned in the Rye House Plot and Monmouth Rebellion. Ultimately went over to the Prince of Orange.

§ *Brandon*, Charles Gerard, Viscount, eldest son of Charles Gerard, first Earl of

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eldest son of the Earl of Macclesfield. Thomas Legh, in a letter to his brother Richard, bearing date May 14, 1685, describes the scene in Westminster Hall when Oates received his sentence :

“ Upon his return to ye Jayle crowds of people cried out ‘ Cutt off his ears,’ others ‘ hanging’s too good for him ’ ! and a deal more to this purpose, but for all this yt so errand a saint shold not be destitute of comfort, the Ld Lovelace \* ran through the populace, embraced him in his arms and appeared in a second mourning all yt [that] day in ye Hall, wch folly is much admir’d att.”

Further orders had been issued to the Deputy-Lieutenants for preserving the peace of the kingdom, and, according to a Proclamation of the new King (a copy of which is preserved at Lyme), for seizing “ all disafected and suspicious persons and particularly all Nonconformist Ministers.” A letter from the Earl of Sunderland,† dated June 4, 1685, preserved at Lyme, addressed to all the Deputy-Lieutenants, thanks them in the King’s name :

“ He directs me to tell you that he is well satisfied with your zeal for his service and with the care you have taken for preserving the peace of that County at this Juncture. And as to your raising the Militia or searching for Arms, His Majesty leaves it to your Discretions to do therein what you shall think fit.”

Lord Derby writes to Richard from Knowsley on July 17, 1685, two days after Monmouth’s execution :

“ I am much vexed I was detained upon the road by illness yt hindered me seeing you yesterday. I should have been doubly glad at this time to discource about yr neighbours, but since that cannot be, I hope you will with ye Deputy Lieutenants take care of their security who are esteemed dangerous to the Government. You are all empowred to do so in my absence, and I question not yr performing it & taking

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Macclesfield; succeeded his father about 1693; married first a daughter of Sir Richard Mason, from whom he was separated; secondly, a daughter of — Harbord, but had no children by either wife. He was ambassador to the Court of Holland and died there.

\* *Lovelace*, John, third Baron (1638?–1693), was arrested on account of the Rye House Plot in 1683; he took up the cause of William III, and was overpowered and imprisoned by James II’s supporters in 1688.

† *Sunderland*, Robert Spencer, second Earl (see p. 14).



# JAMES II AND CHICHELEYS

some particular care of those gentlemen in yr parts who are gone from their own houses.

“ I am yr affect<sup>t</sup> freind and servant

“ DERBY.”

Among the suspects taken at this time was Sir Robert Duckenfield,\* a son of the Colonel Duckenfield who had been in the service of the Parliament. His letter to Richard displays an anxiety—not unnatural in the circumstances—as to what might be his fate :

“ July 4, 1685.

“ HONRD SR

“ According to youre orders I came yesterday to Knutsford Before foure of the Clock, and waited heare till the Deputy Leivetenants came and they sent word they would leave orders with Captaine Needham, and I have beene with the Captaine and he saith he had noe orders concerning me, but only to bring me hither, and that I may Retorne home if I will. But being Desirouse to have Leave from one of the Deputy Leivetenants, and having soe large experience of youre Kyndness to me, I presume to desire the favoure to have youre Leave that I may Retorne home, and I shall be ready to observe the first summons. My wife’s weakness occasioneth her to be very desireous I should be with her till she hath Recovered a Little more strenght. Sir, this favoure being granted, will be a very great adition to the Many obligations Laid upon me, Soe Desireing a Lyne by this Bearer, with my Humble servise to youre selfe and youre good Lady,

“ I Remaine

“ Youre most Humble Servant

“ These

“ ROBERT DUCKENFIELD.

“ For the most Hon<sup>rd</sup> Richard Leigh Es<sup>re</sup> at his Lyme. Urgent.”

A vindication of the character of Sir Robert Duckenfield, taking the form of a petition to the Lord-Lieutenants, signed by the Rector of Ashton-under-Lyne and three churchwardens, is amongst the Legh papers. It has an additional interest from there being some marginal notes of a disparaging character relating to Sir Robert, in the handwriting of Thomas Chol-

\* *Duckenfield*, Sir Robert, a son of Colonel Duckenfield, who was in the service of the Parliament. Sir Robert was created a baronet in 1665; he married first Jane, daughter of Sir R. Estcourt, secondly Susanna, daughter of R. Thomson of Culpho, Suffolk; he had large families by both wives.

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mondeley of Vale Royal.\* Against the words "We the Ministers and Churchwardens," etc., Thomas Cholmondeley adds, "but no other subscribers." Where the reverend gentleman describes Sir Robert as being a person "who liveth peaceably and quietly among his neighbours" a marginal note states, "it wants ye hard word 'loyally'"; and the Rector's description of the delinquent as "a gentleman that cometh and reverently attendeth the parish Church" is accompanied by a marginal note to this effect, "neither constant, frequent, nor often."

We may take it, therefore, that Sir Robert Duckenfield was probably imbued with many of the sentiments and principles of his late father, and that his loyalty to his Sovereign was much in question.

A letter, written to Richard from London just after Monmouth's execution says :

"Mr. Francis, who killed Dangerfield,† was hanged yesterday. My Lord Stamford ‡ was yesterday taken to ye Tower, where he is closely secured as ye report goes, for furnishing ye rebellious Rogues with moneys. I am afraid there has been many people who pretended freindship to us all who would have been glad of an opportunity to have enjoyed our estates and cut our throts."

Sir Robert Cotton,§ a first cousin and neighbour of Richard's, was thrown into the Tower at this date, his wife beseeching Richard to try and obtain for him "a Littel Liberty for his health's sake."

It was not enough to keep clear of bad company, but it was necessary to report at once any seditious talk heard casually or brought to the ears of any person, who ran the greatest risk in

\* Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal (see p. 44).

† *Dangerfield*, Thomas (1650-85), false witness and coiner; was befriended by Mrs. Cellier, the Popish midwife; he personated the Duke of Monmouth and claimed miraculous gifts of healing; he died in 1685 from a blow inflicted by one Robert Francis.

‡ *Stamford*, Thomas Grey, second Earl (1654-1720), imprisoned in connection with the Rye House Plot, pardoned in 1688. He married Mary, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Joseph Maynard, one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal.

§ *Cotton*, Sir Robert, second son of Thomas Cotton of Combermere, Cheshire, by his wife Elizabeth Calveley of Lea, sister of Mrs. Thomas Legh, the mother of Richard. Sir Robert Cotton succeeded his brother George in 1647. He married Hester, daughter of Sir Thomas Salusbury of Llewenner.



## JAMES II AND CHICHELEYS

not bringing the matter before the proper authorities. This was a grand opportunity for spies and informers, who made it their business to derive all benefit they could out of the blood-money obtained in this infamous traffic. The informers were not only concerned with the King and Royal Family, but were also busy with all members of society, and mischief-making on a large and small scale was universal. Richard himself had suffered much from these pests, and the following abject apology, extracted from one of his own tenants, will show how he dealt with any offence of this kind :

“ Sep. 23, 1685.

“ I Richard Hilton of Newton, being truly sensible of and heartily sorry for my late ill behaviour towards my Master the Lord of Lyme, & especially as to what words were in a most scurrilous and unadvised manner spoken by me in the hearing of Mr. Widdows and Mr. Needham, doe hereby make this my humble acknowledgement of the same, and beg his pardon, on the sole condition of my more dutiful and mannerly behaviour towards him for the time to come.

“ RICHARD HILTON.

“ signed by me in the presence of

“ SAM NEEDHAM

“ ROBT EDEN.”

## CHAPTER XVI

### JAMES II AND HIS PARLIAMENT

1685 THE twenty-five years of the reign of Charles II were years of substantial constitutional progress. While not actually acknowledging that Parliament had the right of directing the choice of his Ministers, Charles II, with admirable tact and cleverness, always managed that the selection of these should be adapted to the changing temper of Parliament and the nation. The formation of parliamentary parties, which began in this reign, was also a condition of parliamentary strength, and although he did not live to see the establishment of party government, Charles II unwittingly prepared the way for it.

The country was prosperous. The population of England now exceeded 5,000,000. Rents were rising, and commerce was rapidly on the increase. New houses were springing up between Lincoln's Inn and what is now known as Soho Square, and the Court and frequent meetings of Parliament attracted to the Metropolis many families which, a generation earlier, would have lived entirely in the country.

James II, although promising on his accession to preserve the laws and protect the established Church, did not fulfil these pledges. A professed Roman Catholic himself, having Mass celebrated with open doors in his chapel at Whitehall, he was persuaded that he could, by force of will, overcome any opposition on the part of his people and Government. His determination to procure religious liberty for the Roman Catholics caused him to resolve on the repeal of the Test Act. If anything could increase the dislike of the nation to this measure, it was the fact that Louis XIV had just—this same year, 1685—revoked the Edict of Nantes, issued by his ancestor, Henri IV,

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## JAMES II AND PARLIAMENT

to protect the French Protestants, thereby handing them over to the cruellest persecution. It might fairly be argued that what the French king had done, James, if he got the power, might be expected to do hereafter. Lord Halifax was dismissed from the Presidency of the Council for refusing to support the King's proposal, and the greatest excitement and indignation prevailed in Parliament and the country at large. The House of Commons, the most loyal House that had ever been chosen, remonstrated with the King, and there were signs that the House of Lords intended to support the remonstrance.

“I am very much troubled for those hardships ye Parl: lies under,”

Frank Cholmondeley \* writes to Richard on November 16, 1685,

“for this is a difficult Step ye King has made, and reflects too severely upon ye integrity of his word, who has positively s<sup>d</sup> yt Hee will *endeavour to preserve this Governmt both in Church and State as it is Now by Law Established*, and for this you may ye more firmly rely upon a Promise so Solemnly made : wch must certainly fail in gt measure if ye Test be violated, wch is a gt guard and security to our Church. If this Fence be broak, I know not where it will end nor wt bounds will contain ye pleasure of ye bill ; this has an ill aspect, pray God avert ye fear'd Consequence . . . and yt our confidence in ye King's word may not be shaken, wch has been so much extolled.”

James prorogued Parliament on November 20, and Thomas Legh writes on December 5, giving his brother an account of what had taken place in the House of Commons, showing that, loyal though they were, the members were determined to fight to the uttermost to defeat the arbitrary measures James was seeking to impose upon them :

“ . . . ye great heart-burning was att ye Test wch was vigourously and bravely adhered to by ye House of Commons to their immortall fame, for had we suffered such a breach in ye Mounds of o<sup>r</sup> Church, a spring-tyde of popery wold have raged, for ye Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy are already sweetned to go delicately down, but ye Test cannot be dispensed with. I am much in ye minde of our Henbury neighbour that ye cursed bigots the Jesuiticall party have been very importune with ye King to make a vigorous push, and try if ye roaring of

\* See p. 65.

## LYME LETTERS

ye Lyon wold consternate and terrifie us into a resignation and surrender of yt strong Bullwork wch he, finding strongly defended, without heat and passion, his person with all deference and humble submissions respected, his occasions with all readyness taken into consideration and completed, although something of anger was expressed when ye words ‘ You are prorogued ’ came out, yet certainly our next meeting (Deo assistente) will bee happy, the King having often since yt time said this House of Commons did generally consist of Men of ye highest and most unshaken loyalty yt ever sate in Westminster.”

A newsletter of December 10, 1685, gives a terrible account of what followed on the Revocation of the celebrated Edict of Nantes, and how the French king’s resentment against the unfortunate Huguenots pursued them even beyond the grave :

“ . . . Ye greatest part of ye Huguenots being either turned or fled, ye Rest may chance goe Unmolested especially in and about this Citty [Paris]. The Marshall Chumburgh \* himself is not out of his Troubles, having a Small time allowed him whether he will Turne or noe. The Gentlemen in the Country have gener<sup>lly</sup> Refused to Turne and have suffered all Imaginary Hardshipps. Ye strictest Edict yt hath been Issued out is that noe Catholic shall Harbour or protect either the Person or goods of any Huguenot, on pain of being sent to ye Gallies. . . . A person of quality in Brittany who had changed his Religion, suddenly after fell sick, the preist Exhorted him to prepare himselfe to Receive ye Sacram<sup>t</sup> wch he Refused, saying he had obeyed ye King’s orders and he was obliged to noe more, but after dyeing he was buried in ye holy ground, but ye King Upon Notice thereof ord<sup>rd</sup> ye body to be publicquely Taken up and throwne to be Devoured, which was accordingly Executed. The said King hath given ord<sup>rs</sup> for ye printing of 25,000 New Testaments in ye Vulgar Tongue according to y<sup>e</sup> Translation of Father Amelott for ye Use of ye New Converts.”

The persecution of these unfortunate Huguenots was carried to such an extent that Louis XIV even published a Declaration for the removal from their parents of children under the age of eighteen. He also forbade all Protestants or New Converts to make use of any servants but Papists, on penalty of the galleys

\* *Schomberg*, Frederick Armand, Count, then Duke (1615–90), distinguished General; entered the French army in 1650; fought in all the wars against Spain. Entered the service of William of Orange and founded a regiment of French refugees at the time of the Revolution of 1688. Killed at the battle of the Boyne or Drogheda.



## JAMES II AND PARLIAMENT

for men, and being whipped and branded on the forehead with a hot iron for women.

We hear by a letter from an unknown correspondent, bearing 1686 date September 28, 1686, that

“The Duchess of Portsmouth is coming over three weeks hence, and brings measures with her for us to follow,”

showing therefore that her influence was still being used by Louis XIV, as much with James II as with his brother the late King, to promulgate his designs.

The condition of the French refugees was claiming the public attention, briefs for the relief of the sufferers were read in all the churches, and the refusal of James to take any steps to protest against the inhumanity of Louis XIV excited considerable discontent amongst his subjects, who took this apathy on the part of their Sovereign as a sign that he approved of the French king's persecuting measures.

Thus James II was paving the way to his own destruction.

Had Richard Legh's life been prolonged, it is more than probable that his staunch love and loyalty to his Sovereign would have been severely tried, if not actually shattered, but his untimely death saved him from the bitterness of realizing that his idol had but feet of clay, so he retained for his King the same love and allegiance—which had never wavered—up to the very end.

## CHAPTER XVII

### LETTICE AND HER ADMIRERS

I must now introduce to my readers some of the younger members of the Legh family, beginning with Lettice, eldest daughter of Richard and Elizabeth Legh. We have already mentioned that Lettice, the eldest of thirteen children, was born at Lyme on December 2, 1663, some two years after the marriage of her parents.

Neither money nor pains were spared on her education, which, with that of her brothers and sisters, was carried on at Lyme; we hear of a tutor being engaged, "a bachelor of arts, a very good scholar and of great modesty and sobriety."

No children could have had more ideally happy lives and upbringing in more enchanting surroundings. A beautiful home, where Love reigned supreme, fond parents who made the children their chief consideration, entering keenly into all the pleasures and pursuits of their little ones, and, albeit never spoiling or over-indulging, giving them everything the heart could desire.

From a very early age Lettice, a capable and intelligent girl, became a great help to her mother, whose health was delicate and who, in addition to being hampered with the cares and responsibilities of a large and rapidly increasing family, suffered much from defective eyesight. As she grew older Lettice had often to act as hostess and help her father to entertain the various notabilities who visited at Lyme—Lord Derby and others—when her mother was obliged to go up to London to consult doctors and oculists.

Sir Thomas Chicheley, who adored all his grandchildren, was never so happy as when he could persuade his daughter and son-in-law to spare some of them for a visit to him in London.



## LETTICE AND HER ADMIRERS

These visits were much looked forward to by the young people, who greatly appreciated all the petting and spoiling which their grandfather, exercising the usual privilege of this relationship, bestowed upon them.

“They are very good, so good that I could wish you would let us have 1683  
Lettice and Betty with us at London this winter,”

Sir Thomas writes in 1683,

“I writ this in earnest, therefore pray let it be so if you can possibly spare them.”

As they grew up and required masters for the different accomplishments, foreign languages, music and dancing, etc., which were considered as important in the seventeenth century as they are to-day, the young people were enabled to obtain these during the periods of their stay at Sir Thomas Chicheley's house in Southampton Square, where he chiefly resided after the sale of Wimpole, for their parents did not take a house in London every year.

The two elder girls appear to have been very devoted to each other, and in 1682, when Lettice was to pay a visit to her grandfather, the prospect of leaving her favourite sister behind, seems to have caused her some distress :

“You say Lettice and Betty are very sensible of their parting,” Sir Thomas writes to Richard at Lyme, “and doe reckon how long it will be before they meet againe. I can only say it, as you do, I hope in God they may never meet with greater trouble.”

Although her portraits do not show her to have been so, Lettice seems to have been considered unusually good-looking and very attractive. We have it on the authority of her grandfather that she was much admired :

“I thanke you and your wife for the company of Lettice,” he writes to his son-in-law at Lyme, “so that I think she will deserve the best match in town, for she is very good and very handsome.”

A doubtful portrait of Lettice by an indifferent artist, painted after the style of Sir Peter Lely, shows her to have had dark hair and eyes with a fair complexion.

## LYME LETTERS

1684 The bevy of beautiful girls, Lettice aged twenty-one in  
1684, Elizabeth, or Betty as she was always called, twenty, and  
Fanny, number three, aged eighteen or thereabouts, was attract-  
ing to Lyme all the gilded youth of the countryside, who col-  
lected about the young ladies like bees round a honey-pot.  
The more stately and sedate parties of former days had now  
given place to those of merry, laughing boys and girls. Many  
are the allusions in the letters to the "mirth and jollity" that  
was going on under the roof of the old house, and bowls, dancing,  
riding and boating were among the "diversions" enjoyed by  
1686 all the young people, while their elders looked on with indulgent  
and approving eyes and indeed were nothing loth to take part  
in the amusements themselves :

"I wish you and ye good company all satisfaction in your innocent  
Mirths and happynesse while I drudge on to little purpose,"

Sir John Chicheley writes to Richard from his office at the  
Admiralty in 1686.

Dancing was as popular in the seventeenth century as it is  
to-day. A very favourite dance, especially during wedding  
festivities, was the "Cushion Dance," a somewhat riotous  
diversion, accompanied by much kissing. One person held a  
cushion while the rest of the company danced in a ring, singing.  
At the end of the chant, the cushion was laid at the feet of a  
favoured person and knelt on. The individual thus saluted,  
kissed the kneeling suppliant, and then took up the cushion in  
turn and danced round with it as the first had done. A corre-  
spondent writes to Peter at Lyme about this date, saying he  
was going to visit a relation to "break a Xmas pye" with him,  
having left other friends "dancing the cushion dance and singing  
carols." The cushion figure of the modern cotillion no doubt  
has its origin in a modified form from the seventeen-century  
dance.

1684 Marriages were generally arranged by the parents of both  
families as they are in France to this day, and in 1684 Lady  
Chicheley,\* Lettice's aunt, was evidently inquiring about a

\* See p. 33.



## LETTICE AND HER ADMIRERS

Mr. Cook, or Coke, who was apparently of a suitable age and standing and likely to be acceptable as a suitor for the girl's hand.

But although of a gentle and amiable disposition, Lettice was possessed of considerable force of character and strength of mind, and was not to be coerced into making any marriage against her inclination. For some years past an elderly peer, whose name is never mentioned, pursued her with his unwelcome attentions, but in the teeth of the fiercest opposition from her worldly minded mother, who was most anxious for the match, Lettice flatly refused to consider it at all, and dismissed her elderly lord, who seems to have behaved very well under the circumstances.

“My Lord \* will not permit of her being pressed beyond her inclination,”

writes Sir John Chicheley to Richard at Lyme,

“I hope Sister is so good a Christian as to forgive and forget all things in relation to my niece and ye Lord.”

But for some years Lettice had the fear hanging over her that she would have to submit, however unwillingly, to the bestowal of her hand without her heart. Speaking of Lettice's second sister Fanny, Mrs. Fountaine † refers in 1684 to “the modest fright Lettice was in when the gentleman courted Fanny, I fancy she thought him as dangerous as the Lord to herself.”

One of Lettice's chief admirers (whom she afterwards married) was her cousin William Bankes of Winstanley, ‡ generally called “Will,” a Lancashire magnate of some distinction, the head of an important family in the county.

The young man was very assiduous in his attentions to his 1685 fair cousin, continually waiting upon her and offering his services, and always in attendance and anticipating her wants. During

\* See “The House of Lyme,” p. 312.

† See note, p. 29.

‡ *Bankes of Winstanley*, William, eldest son of William Bankes of Winstanley by his wife Frances Legh, daughter and eventually sole heiress in blood of Peter Legh of Bruch (youngest son of old Sir Peter Legh), by his second wife Anne Birkenhead of Chester; born 1659; married, March 1687, Lettice, eldest daughter of Richard Legh of Lyme.

## LYME LETTERS

the autumn of 1685 he was writing to Richard at Lyme, in great concern over the health of his first cousin Piers Legh of Bruch,\* whose serious illness was supposed to have been caused by the hardships he endured during the Monmouth rebellion, when he enlisted as a volunteer in Lord Feversham's † army and went through the whole campaign.

By September signs of consumption had evidently begun to show themselves, and from the very first the doctors, amongst whom were the great Sir Thomas Millington ‡ and Dr. Short,§ took a most serious view of his case. The illness must have developed with startling rapidity, for Piers writes to Richard in July 1685, after the skirmish at Philip's Norton and just before the battle of Sedgemoor, in which he participated, apparently in good health, describing the progress of the campaign. A later letter dated July 21, makes no mention of ill health, but by the 14th of September he was seriously unwell. Mrs. Bankes,|| Will's mother, who had had charge of her nephew ever since his parents' deaths (his mother in 1661 and his father in 1671), was distracted with grief and anxiety, and, as her son describes it, "The fears my Mother is in hath almost brought her as low as himself."

By the 22nd of September the anxiety was so great that the physicians ordered their poor patient for change of air to the Gravel Pits near Kensington, though this was seldom done we hear "till they know not what to do for a Patient." Kensington, which in those days was quite suburban and rural, is described by Bowack ¶ in 1705 as consisting of one street about three-quarters of a mile in length. The Kensington Gravel Pits was apparently a village adjacent to the town. This was looked

\* *Legh of Bruch*, Piers (see note, p. 96).

† *Feversham*, Louis Duras, second Earl (1640-1700), general; commanded James II's troops at Sedgemoor in 1685.

‡ *Millington*, Sir Thomas (1628-1704), physician, of Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge; fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford; Court physician and knighted in 1680; the alleged discoverer of sexuality in plants.

§ *Short*, Thomas (1635-85), physician; created M.D. by Royal Mandate in 1668; F.R.C.P. 1675.

|| *Mrs. Bankes* (see note, p. 96).

¶ *Bowack*, John (flourished 1737), author of "Antiquities of Middlesex" begun in 1706.



## LETTICE AND HER ADMIRERS

upon as a health resort, and persons suffering from lung trouble were sent here, the air being supposed to be very beneficial.

All his relations were in the deepest concern about poor Piers. His aunt, Mrs. Bankes, never left him, and her son Will took a lodging in a small house close by in order to be near the boy. Sir John Chicheley writes to Richard on September 22 :

“ My wife and I come just now from seeing poor Pearce, who I doubt will not be long in this world ; undoubtedly he’s deep in a consumption and much altered since I saw him last. Poor Mrs. Banks is extremely concerned for him.”

Sir John had been himself in former years threatened with serious lung trouble, and attributed his recovery to the fact of his having been sent to the Kensington Gravel Pits :

“ ’Twas thither they sent me when they knew not what more to do for me, I wish it may be with him as ’twas with me, and that he’ll recover after a long languishing distemper.”

The patient was evidently too ill to bear the fatigue of the journey. He had been for some weeks on a diet of asses’ milk and “ broths,” and the customary drastic remedies were being administered and all fresh air, of course, rigidly excluded, with the result that he was growing weaker day by day.

“ My poor Kinsman’s weakness must still be the unpleasant subject of my letters,”

Will Bankes writes to Richard on October 8, 1685,

“ His purging hath brought him so low that his limbs fail, and for these four days he hath for the most part kept his bed, but today he got up about twelve and looks more cheerfully. He still spits abundance, but says he doth not find his Breast any emptier. His breath is very short when up, but when in bed he seems to take it with more freedom. He sleeps but little except in those nights he takes his Cordial, which hath (among other ingredients) opium infused. He hath left off his Milk diet, takes only what his ass gives morning and evening. He eats what broths he hath a fancy for, but his stomach craves but little. Since he fell to his broths we fancy his purging hath abated.”

On the 15th of October comes the last report from Will Bankes :

## LYME LETTERS

“My poor Kinsman is yet alive, but under such misery that we can neither wish nor expect to have him long so. He bears all with extraordinary patience, and his senses are still perfect.”

The end must have come very soon after this letter was written, and this young life, so full of hope and promise, was cut off at the age of twenty-four. It may well have been said of him that he preserved all the best traditions of his ancient race, and that he gave his life for his Sovereign just as much as if he had been killed in battle. The fatigues and privations of the campaign against Monmouth, telling on a delicate constitution, were the certain cause of his untimely death. He was buried at Warrington beside his father and mother, his half-sister Frances (afterwards the wife of Peter Legh of Lyme) becoming sole heiress to the Bruch estates.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### WILL AND LETTICE

THE courtship of Will Bankes and Lettice Legh was progressing in 1686, and the young lady was evidently well disposed towards her cousin. Unfortunately we have no trustworthy portrait of him. He was a clever and capable young man, and occupied an important position in the county, where he was held in much esteem. He had some post under Lord Derby, who thought very highly of him, and he filled besides some government appointment, though what this was does not appear. Although a very charming—not to say fascinating and captivating young man—he seems to have been of a rather obstinate disposition, with a very considerably good opinion of himself, and in 1686 was fined five pounds for refusing to discharge the duty of a Justice of the Peace :

“ I beg your advice,” writes a correspondent to Richard, “ whether he doth not deserve to pay it, if he’ll not act, our Country being at such great need of him.”

Peter Legh, Richard’s son and heir, whose character and appearance I have already fully described (see “ The House of Lyme ”), was also at this time—although only seventeen years of age—paying his addresses to his charming and attractive cousin Frances Legh of Bruch,\* but in this case the course of true love was not running very smoothly, owing to the objections raised to the match by busybodies on the score of too near a relationship. These objections were however happily removed.†

\* *Frances Legh of Bruch*, only daughter and heiress of Piers Legh of Bruch (grandson of old Sir Peter Legh of Lyme), by his second wife Abigaile Chetwode. Frances was half-sister of Piers Legh of Bruch (the younger), and by his death in 1685 the Bruch estates devolved upon her. She was born in 1670.

† See “ The House of Lyme,” p. 345.

## LYME LETTERS

Peter was spending a good deal of his time in London attending to his parliamentary duties, and while there always stayed in Southampton Square with his uncle and aunt, Sir John and Lady Chicheley, who were devoted to him, as was his grandfather, Sir Thomas.

“Our nice young Sparke is earnest to be in ye Country with his Grandfather,”

Sir John writes to Richard in February, 1686-7.

“Ye reason I cannot imagine, unless it’s because his Mother and I tell him of his faults, which none does with so much freedom.”

1687 Both these marriages took place in the spring of 1687. A charming letter is sent to Frances by her step-grandmother, Mrs. Anne Hyde,\* begging her acceptance of a small wedding present :

“SWEET BRYDE

“Give this poore present leave to beg ye acknowledge of my love, as of a massy peace after ye Moad, to adorn your dressing-table. Sometimes a pin shows as much good will in one as a pound in another, and I rejoyce as much in your good and contentment as ye nearest relation you have, for ever when I think you are my son † L’s daughter, methinks there should be something of my Peg in you, and now have nothing to be sorry for but that your groome’s name is not Peirs, that I might think I have him still, however he is my Grandson. I pray present my love and service to him, also both your Mothers ‡ and Aunt Bankes § and beleeve me to be ever

“Your most loving and reall servant and Grandmo

“A. HYDE.”

No record of Peter and Frances’ marriage is to be found, but it must have taken place in March or April 1687.

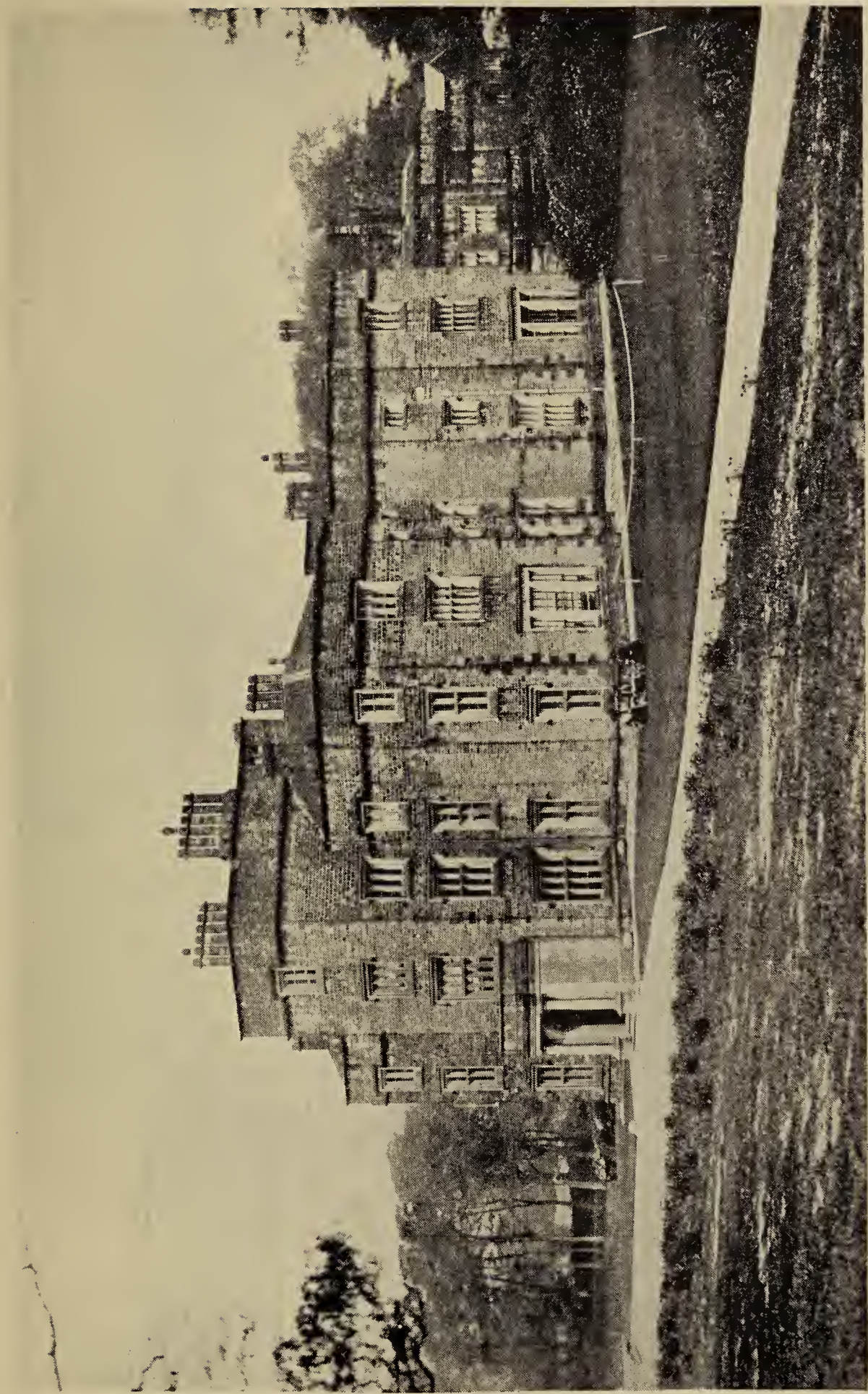
\* *Hyde*, Anne, daughter of Sir Richard Brooke of Norton, by his second wife, Katherine, daughter of Sir Henry Nevill of Billingbere, Cheshire; she married Edward Hyde of Norbury, who died in 1661. She was the aunt of the Sir Richard Brooke of Norton who in 1656 married Posthuma Francisca, sister of Richard Legh of Lyme.

† Her son-in-law, Piers Legh of Bruch, whose first wife was her daughter Margaret.

‡ Frances’ prospective mother-in-law, Elizabeth Legh, and her own mother, Mrs. Abigaile Chetwode, second wife of Piers Legh of Bruch, who fought at Winnington Bridge and died 1671.

§ “Aunt Bankes” (see note, p. 96).





WINSTANLEY HALL, LANCASHIRE

*By permission of Mr. and Mrs. Bankes of Winstanley*





## WILL AND LETTICE

Will Bankes and Lettice Legh were married in Wigan Church on March 31, 1687, exactly five months before the death of Richard Legh, which took place on the 31st of August following. The marriage is inscribed as follows in the Wigan parish register :

“ March 31, 1687, William Bankes Esq of Winstanley and Mistress Letis Legh of Cheshire.”

Why the marriage should have taken place from the bridegroom's house instead of from the bride's does not appear.

By the marriage settlements, which are drawn up on a formidable parchment document of much involved matter and many pages, Lettice was to be assured a jointure of £500 a year. This would represent about £1500 at the present day (pre-war rate). Will Bankes bequeathes the whole of his estate to his eldest son,

“ upon the body of the said Lettice lawfully begotten, and of the heirs male of the body of the same son thereafter lawfully to her begotten. And for default of such issue then to the use and behoofe of the second son of the sd Will Bankes ”

and so on—up to the tenth son. Failing ten sons, the property was to go to Will Bankes' brother Thomas, and failing his heirs, to his next brother James.

But although her very short married life was ideally happy, poor Lettice was, alas ! not blessed with any children, and the property went at Will's death to his next brother Thomas.

Winstanley, where Will Bankes brought his fair young bride after their marriage, is a beautiful Jacobean house, still containing much good furniture of the period. A fine portrait of old Sir Peter Legh hangs in the dining-room, and this portrait of her great-grandfather must have been brought by Lettice as part of her marriage portion. There are also portraits of her father and mother, copies of those at Lyme, by indifferent artists. Internally the house has been much altered, but externally it still preserves a great deal of its original character. It stands in a large well-wooded park, some three and a half miles from Wigan.

At the period of which we write Wigan had not developed

## LYME LETTERS

its enormous resources of mineral wealth, nor were there the huge factories for cotton-spinning and nail-making, nor the iron founderies, steam-engine manufactories and vitriol works which exist at the present day. Formerly a rich agricultural district, it has now become—to a large extent—a waste “Black Country.”

The horrible smoke of the present-day Wigan has done much to destroy the rural character and sylvan beauty of Winstanley. The fine old trees are blackened and stag-headed, alkali works and coal mines rear their hideous heads, pouring forth noxious vapours from their chimneys, poisoning the air and penetrating to the woods and glades of the lovely park.

Wigan has figured in all the wars that have taken place in England from the earliest times, and has always borne a distinguished part in the fighting. Its very name is belligerent, “Wig” signifying a fight in the Saxon, and “en” constituting the plural of that noun.\*

During the Wars between Charles I and the Parliament, Wigan became a sort of central garrison for the King, and throughout the whole of the Civil Wars retained its character of “the faithful and loyal town of Wigan.” It remained true and staunch to the Royal cause, and in 1745 gave shelter to Prince Charles Edward when he passed through the town on his way from Derby. The Manor House where he slept the night is still existing, and is pointed out with pride by the citizens. It possesses a beautiful old oak staircase and some charming oak-panelled rooms. Prince Charlie’s bedroom is still shown, and his portrait hangs in the Wigan Free Library. Something of the glamour and romance attaching to the name of Prince Charlie still survives, shining through the smoke and murky atmosphere of its city.

But in 1687 the air of Winstanley was pure, the sun shone in undiminished glory, and the world seemed very bright and fair to the bride and bridegroom starting their happy married life in the old ancestral home. Here they passed the spring and early summer, absorbed in their love idyll, which was only interrupted from time to time when Will had to leave his

\* Baines’s “History of Lancashire.”



## WILL AND LETTICE

Lettice to attend to the duties connected with his various posts. Everything seemed smiling and prosperous, when with appalling suddenness, there came the blow which transformed the happy house of Lyme into one of mourning.\* The very serious illness of Richard Legh summoned all his family to Lyme, where the end came on August 31, 1687.

\* See "The House of Lyme," p. 346.

## CHAPTER XIX

### LYME UNDER PETER LEGH

1687 UNTIL the war between the King and the Parliament suspended it, an inquisition post mortem had been taken on the death of every tenant, to ascertain what lands he held, the terms on which he held them, the relief he had to pay, and who, and of what age was his heir. On the death of Richard Legh, however, for the first time in the family history, no such inquisition was taken. Nor was it necessary, for on the Restoration an Act of Parliament had passed, by which all the above burdensome fruits of tenure were taken away and abolished.

Peter Legh coming into his inheritance at the age of eighteen, a mere child, albeit a married man, with no experience to guide him and none to give him a helping hand or disinterested advice, had a very difficult part to play. He was handicapped also by the fact of succeeding a man so able, intelligent and universally beloved as was his father, and having the certainty, moreover, that any comparison between them must necessarily be very much to his own disadvantage.

Condolences poured in upon the bereaved family at Lyme beginning with the King himself, who expressed the deepest sorrow at the death of one whom he had always looked upon as a personal friend, as well as a most faithful and devoted subject and servant. Richard's old aunt, Lady Calveley,\* her spelling worse than ever, writes in the greatest distress at the loss of

“my near and dear Kinsman, who i Loved aboue all things in this world. Letil [little] did i think i should a worne mourning for him.”

Mrs. Langley,† the Chicheley housekeeper, sends word on behalf of Sir Thomas Chicheley, quite overcome with grief, and

\* See note, p. 66.

† See note, p. 114.



## LYME UNDER PETER LEGH

prostrate with a bad attack of the gout, proffering her own condolences at

“the loss of ye best of fathers, which nothing in this world can make up to you; I pray God send you help in this your great need, and above all raise up your poor disconsolate Mother.”

Sir John Chicheley was not able to be of any help to his young nephew, being laid up with a pain in his side (perhaps an attack of pleurisy?), for which he had been “let blood” twice within three days. Thomas Legh, Peter’s other uncle, was also occupied elsewhere.

Will Bankes, however, seems to have been of much assistance and to have shown himself business-like and kind. But above all, Peter’s own good commonsense and earnest desire to follow the example set him by his father, and to do the right thing in the right way, helped him to tide over many difficulties that might almost have appeared unsurmountable. One of his first letters was to his cousin Lord Molyneux,\* declining, on the score of youth and inexperience, the office of Deputy-Lieutenant:

“Lyme, October ye 3. 1687.

“MY LORD,

“My Mother and everyone of us heer are mightily obliged to your Lordshippe for ye favour of yr enquiry of us and I most particularly for yt Honor to make me one of yr Deputy Lieutenants. My Lord, I wold willingly serve under yr Lordshippe this Concern, but being not experienced in it and und<sup>r</sup> age, besides indispensable business wch lyes upon mee and my freinds, I hope my present declining of it will bee acceptable to yr Lordshippe, and as in all things I will endeavour to imitate my Father; so I will be diligent to express myself

“My Lord

“Your Lordshippes Kinsman and most

“obliged servant to command

“P. L.”

No sooner was the breath out of his father’s body than, trading on his youth and inexperience, poor Peter was besieged by relatives and other individuals for favours of all kinds. One of the Gerards writes begging that two of his horses may “run

\* See note, p. 73.

## LYME LETTERS

for some time in your Parke," giving the reason for asking that they would not be safe in his own, owing to the disturbed state of the country. Another cousin requires a postilion horse for five days to go from Cheshire into Yorkshire. Requests for money and loans of all kind beset the poor young man, who had to exercise the greatest tact in his replies to avoid giving unnecessary offence in dealing with preposterous demands.

He determined to model his life as much as possible on that of his father, and to carry on exactly on the same lines and maintain the same state and way of living at Lyme as there had always been. He and Frances kept practically open house, and Peter was hospitable and generous to his even distant relatives, loading them with gifts of good ale, cheese and venison. They were a little inclined to take advantage of his kindness and generosity, and never scrupled to beg the favour of the loan of a "pad" or even of a coach and four. He writes a charming letter to his grandfather, Sir Thomas Chicheley, pressing him to come to Lyme :

" . . . Last Xmas you were pleased to have some thoughts of coming to Lyme in May wch was joyful news to us all. I hope Sir, you have ye same opinion of mee as of my Father, yt is always to be assured of a hearty welcome to Lyme . . . my coach and horses and what I have is att yr service to command."

The old man, highly gratified, thanks his grandson, but declines the invitation for this particular year :

" I long to see you and yr wife, but the times are such and my owne affaires so many that I dare not nor cannot adventure on it this yeare, but the next, if please God to spaire me life and health, I will not faile both of seeing you and yr good wife."

1688      Some months after Richard's death old Madam Legh settled in London with her two elder daughters, leaving her other children, the youngest of whom was only a little over a year old at his father's death, to the care of Peter and Frances at Lyme, and paying long visits there herself from time to time. Being childless themselves, Peter and Frances were kindness itself to their small brothers and sisters, and treated them



## LYME UNDER PETER LEGH

exactly as if they had been their own children. "My Uncle and Aunt says they believe you and Peter to be as kind as any father or mother can be," one of the relations writes to Frances with perfect truth.

Mrs. Langley, the Chicheley's devoted housekeeper, who describes herself as "Ye owld scribe to ye whole family," writes a long letter to Peter on February 14, 1687-8, reporting better news of his grandfather's health, "which I thanke God is much better than we can reasonable expect." This she puts down to the fact of the old man's having been "let blood 8 or 9 ounces, and goes abroad every day."

She gives a description of a riding accident to Mrs. Fountaine, which might have been attended by very serious consequences. As it was, Sarah Fountaine escaped with nothing worse than severe bruises to her face. The customary bleeding was resorted to, with apparently favourable results :

"Your Aunt Fountaine has laitly escaped a very great danger by a fall from her horse. As she and some other company were riding in a narrow lane by a gentleman's house, and a stone horse \* was loose in ye field and Leap't ye hedge and after them. Ye women was terribly frightened, and had but one man with them, who could not with all his indevers keep back ye horse, so ye Ladys was forct to ride for it and it being pretty dark, yr Aunt was struck off her horse with a bow of a tree as she was riding full speed, but thank God had no other hurt that is visible, only bruised in her head and face, that all one side of her face is as black as ink (as they tell me, for I have not seen her, she being in Hertfordshire) but she has been let blood and all care has been taken that is usual in such cases, so that we hope the worst is past with her, only she must induer [endure] her black face for a long while."

One of Peter's sisters was paying a visit to her grandfather, and was evidently working very hard at her accomplishments :

"Your sister is labouring every day at her Music and Dancing, and takes as much paines as you used to doe, soe that she can scarce spare herself time to peep out of doors. If she did not send you ye song according to promise I must excuse for her, for at that time it was dangerous medling with such edged tools, and soe 'tis still, there being

\* Stallion.

## LYME LETTERS

great sums of money offered to find out whoe was ye Author and spreader of it abroad, soe if it should come into the country, have nothing to doe with it."

The literature of the day abounded in scurrilous ballads which were circulated from one end of England to the other, so that it was dangerous to send by post any kind of pamphlet, song or music in which politics might be mentioned—or even hinted at. Mrs. Langley refers to the situation in her letter to Peter :

"Ye great news amongst us now is of a Parl<sup>t</sup> very speedily, and some do venture to affirm that writs for ye choosing one will be out in a few days, tho' others that pretend to know as much says no such thing. There has been great endeavours to put by your Grandfather's being chosen at Cambridge for that Corporation, and several have been offered in his stead, but ye town is wilful and will heare of noebod<sup>y</sup> else. There is a report that ye souldiers that was sent for out of Holland will not come; Ye States has refused it and says by their Articles they are not to part with them unless there be Civil War or any foreign invasion, and if any such thing should happen (and God forbid it should) then not only them but all their army is at ye King's service."

In July 1687 James had dissolved the Parliament and summoned a new one, hoping to be able to secure the Repeal of the Test Act from more amenable Houses.\* But after repeated "regulations" it was found impossible to form a corporate body which would return representatives willing to comply with the royal will, so all thoughts of a Parliament had to be abandoned. With peers, commoners and clergy in dogged opposition to his wishes, James realized that his system of Indulgence, even if he were able to maintain it so long, must end with his death and the accession of a Protestant Sovereign.

It was to provide against such a defeat of his designs that he stooped to ask the aid of William of Orange. But William would have nothing to say to the scheme for the abolition of the Test, and would not be persuaded to countenance an attack on his own religion. Hopeless as the effort seemed, James pressed doggedly on in his attempt to secure Houses who would

\* Green.



## LYME UNDER PETER LEGH

carry out his will. He renewed a fresh Declaration of Indulgence in April 1688, and promised to summon a Parliament in November. The Declaration was read in only four of the London churches, and in these the congregation flocked out of church at the first words of it. 1688

A letter from Will Bankes, amongst the Kenyon papers, gives some interesting details referring to the seven Bishops, and the wonderful courage displayed by a soldier under sentence of death for desertion, who refused to purchase his life at the expense of his faith :

“Winstanley, June 12, 1688.

“ . . . The seven Bishops are gone to the Tower, having refused the Lord Chancellor to be bound to appear at the King's Bench Bar, which, as they were Peers (thinking they might be questioned by the House of Lords) they could not submit to. His Lordship asked them whether they owned the petition ; they all answered it was their own, upon which his Lordship replied it was a seditious one. A soldier that deserted his colours, was going the same day to be hanged, and a priest being earnest with him to turn his religion ; but he told him he was a protestant, and would die so, so pulled his cap over his face and fell to his prayers. Just in the nick of time, a pardon came, without the priest's solicitation. This steadiness of the man gave the Bishops great satisfaction.”

The birth of a son to James II on June 10, 1688, changed the whole situation, and was followed ten days later by an invitation from a small committee of important personages to William of Orange to intervene in arms for the restoration of English liberty and the protection of the Protestant religion.

Lutterell gives some details relating to the poor little royal baby. He reports the child as having been admitted into the Church by “one Laybourne,\* a Popish Bishop.” It had been the intention of the King and Queen that the infant should be brought up by hand, and a Mrs. Delabody was engaged as dry nurse. The bottle feeding was evidently unsuccessful, and the baby was reported as suffering from the gripes and very ill at Richmond in August. A wet nurse, “a tilemaker's wife, a plain country-woman,” was procured for him, evidently with

\* Probably Leybourne, John (1620-1702), a Roman Catholic prelate educated at the English College of Douay, first Vicar Apostolic of the London district in 1688.

## LYME LETTERS

good results, as he was well enough soon after to be moved to Windsor with the King and Queen.

1688 By October, 1688, everything was in hopeless confusion :

“ We have so many soldiers about us yt none knows what may happen. All people disposes both of money and plate for fear of the worst.” \*

The Prince of Orange was on his way and might be expected to arrive in England very shortly. Sir John Chicheley writes from London on October 20 to his sister Elizabeth Legh at Lyme :

“ This morning by an Express from our Ambassador in Holland to His Majesty, the Prince of Orange has put to sea Thursday or Friday sennet, and forct back again by bad weather, in wch 'tis said his army has suffered much, having cast overboard many horses killed in ye bad weather.”

“ The cloud of Rebellion is great and the storm seems dreadful,” Thomas Legh writes in great distress to his nephew Peter at Lyme on November 22,

“ it is not safe in this age and juncture of time to meddle wth Politiques and state affairs. I shall be transported wth joy and hasten to come to that place [Lyme] which God Almighty wonderfully preserved in the late intestine wars.”

But the Prince of Orange was already in this country, having landed at Brixham, in the south of Torbay, on the 5th of November. James realized that the only safety for his son—whose life he felt certain would be attempted—lay in the Royal Family's departure from the country with as little delay as possible. On December 11, the Queen with the baby Prince of Wales and a small retinue escaped to France, James promising his consort to follow within twenty-four hours. He was captured, however, on his way to the coast and was conveyed to Faversham. A letter written from Betty Legh in London to her brother Peter at Lyme, on December 15, reports the serious illness of the King :

“ Ye poor King is very ill at ye place where he was taken with a voylant [violent] bleeding at his Nose. Ye Prince of Orange is not expected here till Monday or Tuesday.”

\* Sir John Chicheley to his sister Elizabeth Legh at Lyme.



## LYME UNDER PETER LEGH

From Faversham James returned to Rochester, where he was joined by his Guards, and from Rochester, with demonstrations of loyalty which gave him a ray of hope, he proceeded in royal guise through the streets of London to Whitehall.

Upon the arrival of the Prince of Orange at Windsor on December 17, he sent a deputation of three peers, Halifax,\* Shrewsbury † and Delamere,‡ accompanied by armed force in the shape of Dutch guards, with a harsh and peremptory order to his uncle to leave the kingdom, and Lord Delamere did not scruple to be one of the bearers of this message to his fallen King. He is said to have discharged this most distasteful duty in so delicate a manner that James is reported to have remarked that “The Lord Delamere, whom he had used ill, treated him with much more regard than those to whom he had been kind and from whom he might better have expected it.”

The next morning, December 18, 1688, James II bade farewell for ever to English soil, and, surrounded by Dutch guards, he went on board the royal barge—a captive—attended by a few faithful adherents. A sad and humiliating spectacle indeed, which the most hardened and indifferent could surely not view without emotion, and his faithful servants with scalding tears of indignation and shame, their Sovereign Lord and King conveyed from his own capital—a prisoner in the hands of foreigners.

\* *Halifax* (see note, p. 6).

† *Shrewsbury*, Charles Talbot, twelfth Earl and only Duke of Shrewsbury (1660–1718).

‡ *Delamere* (see note, p. 131).

## CHAPTER XX

### LYME UNDER WILLIAM AND MARY

1689 THE main characteristic of the Revolution of 1688 was that it established the supremacy of Parliament by setting up a King and Queen who owed their position to a Parliamentary vote. This new departure was viewed with some dissatisfaction and disquietude by the old Cavaliers who, although they could not bring themselves to support the arbitrary measures of James II and his attack upon the Protestant Church, still held their dethroned King in loyal affection, and resented much the advent of his Dutch successor and the means by which his accession and that of his Consort had been achieved. All claims of divine or hereditary right had been set aside, and the representatives of the people could now depose the King and set on the throne whom they chose to select.

“Nothing will satisfy some,” writes Sir John Chicheley to his nephew Peter at Lyme on February 9, 1688-9,

“but placing ye Crown on ye Prince, which will be a precedent for placing it on another whenever ye Lords and Commons please, and so consequently make this Kingdom, which has ever been elective into a Commonwealth if they please, which God forbid. I am sure, for my own part, it's the last Government I should choose to live under, but when necessity may force a man, that one must submit to.”

The second Convention Parliament of England (the first was held in 1660), described as “an assembly of delegates of the people when the Crown is in abeyance,” was summoned to meet at Westminster on January 22, 1688-9. This Convention was declared to be the Parliament on the following 20th of February, when the Crown was offered to William and Mary. The Royal Assent was obtained on February 23. A delay in the delivery of the King's Speech was caused by the robes of

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## LYME UNDER WILLIAM III

the late Sovereigns having been mislaid by the Master of the Wardrobe,\* who stated that they were not to be found (probably they had been stolen), so new ones had to be made for the occasion. A MS. copy of the King's Speech, very non-committal, was sent down to Peter Legh at Lyme, where it is still preserved.

“MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“I have lately told you how sensible I am of your kindness and how much I value the confidence you have reposed in me. And I come hither to assure you that I shall never do anything that may justly lessen your good opinion of me. . . . You yourselves must be sensible that the Posture of Affairs here require your serious consideration and that a Government at Home is necessary, not only for your own peace, but for the support of the Protestant Interest both here and abroad. The state of the Country is such that the dangers are grown too great to be obviated by any slow measures.

“I must leave it to you to consider of the most effectual ways of preventing the Inconveniencys which may arise by Delays and to Judge what forms may be most proper to bring those things to pass for the good of the Nation which I am confident are in all your minds, and which I, on my part, shall always be ready to promote.”

In the new Parliament Sir John Chicheley and Francis Cholmondeley † were returned for Newton borough on January 11. Sir Thomas Chicheley being successful at Cambridge on the same day, and Will Bankes becoming Member for Wigan borough on January 12. There had been some idea of Andrew Fountaine's standing for Newton, and old Madam Legh evidently supported his claim to do so, and was seriously displeased with her brother, Sir John Chicheley, for not having made way for her sister Sarah's husband. Indeed her annoyance must have lasted for nearly a year, Sir John being afraid of meeting her at a family gathering which took place at Lyme some eleven months after the election.

Her character was a strange mixture of self-assertiveness and bullying, coupled with much depth of feeling and tenderness for those she loved. All the best of her had been brought out and developed by her great love for her husband, but after

\* Kenyon papers, Will Bankes to Roger Kenyon.

† See note, p. 65.

## LYME LETTERS

his death her masterful nature and domineering personality became more and more pronounced, and her agonized grief turned her into a querulous and embittered woman. She ruled her children and most of her friends, who all addressed her as "Your Ladyship," with a rod of iron, and they were terrified of doing anything to offend her. Even the great Lord Derby himself stood much in awe of the redoubtable old lady. He was very apprehensive of what his reception by her would be on one occasion when he failed to put in an appearance to support her at the Law Courts, during one of the many Law Suits in which she became involved. He had promised to be there, but was unavoidably detained by business in the House of Lords. "Mrs. Legh will never forgive his absence (as much as though he did it on purpose) which I can satisfy he did not, for he came from his Lodgings with a full design to be there."

Frank Cholmondeley, whose conscience was not quite clear, owing to his having successfully pressed his own claims to stand for Newton, thereby ousting Andrew Fountaine altogether, was as unwilling as was Sir John Chicheley to encounter the ferocious old lady :

"I have been to wait of Madam Lee several times since she came to town,"

a correspondent writes to Peter on March 11, 1688-9,

"and do find I am much in her favour, which I could not have expected, but Frank Cholmondeley is very much at the other end."

"Here has been my Lord Derby and Lord Colchester," \* she writes to her son Peter at Lyme on one occasion, complaining of some treatment she had received from Sir Thomas Mainwaring, a friend and neighbour :

"and my Lord has promised me Mainwaring shall not prevail."

She goes on to complain of some of her other guests and of

\* *Colchester*, Viscount, eldest son of Thomas, Earl Rivers. He married Lady Charlotte Stanley, daughter of Charles, Eighth Earl of Derby, and was therefore this Lord Derby's brother-in-law.





M<sup>rs</sup> Legh Daugh<sup>t</sup> of  
S<sup>r</sup> Tho<sup>s</sup> Chicheley  
K<sup>t</sup> mar<sup>r</sup> Rich<sup>d</sup> Legh  
Esq<sup>r</sup> of Lyme.  
Ætat. 84.

### OLD MADAM LEGH

*From a Painting by Zeeman (or Seeman) in the possession of C. Onslow  
Master, Esq.*







## LYME UNDER WILLIAM III

their behaviour, which would appear to have been peculiar, to put it mildly :

“ Harle came sneaking in to dinner and it being the first time I have seen him since Easter in this house, I was wondering what design had brought him in such a crowd of Company, and upon inquiry, to-day I heare he sat up all night with some of the Company and was drunke this morning, and after he was gone out of the house, Lord Colchester said Mr. Harle followed him up and down to get another good Bargain of him.”

In spite of the protests and advice of all his friends to bow to the inevitable and, in his own interests, to accept the new régime with as good a grace as possible, Peter remained a persistent non-juror :

“ I have been an old friend of your father’s,” a correspondent 1689 writes to him early in January, 1688–9, in urgent and warning terms, telling him also of the suspicions that his uncompromising attitude was causing,

“ and a true honorer of your Mother and I think I cannot better acquit myself towards both than by giving you this caution. . . . It ought to be for your part, Sir, that are coming into ye world, to take such measures in ye beginning of your time to establish your interest and reputation for your own improvement and gaining right Notions what your own and your Nation’s interest is. Read ye Laws and ye Constitutions yt you may not be led away with ye word Loyalty, while you are a stranger to ye thing itselfe. . . . It is already observed, not to your advantage, that you contributed nothing towards Lord Delamere’s expedition in the Prince’s service. . . . Trifle not, but provide for your own safety without delay, be not wanting to your own Interests. Since I have not been failing to inform you which way to steer, I can say my conscience is at rest.”

Disregarding these warnings, however, Peter paid dearly for his attitude, being twice imprisoned in the Tower for long periods on the evidence of false and perjured witnesses.\* He never joined in any of the conspiracies for restoring James II, but reserved to himself the right of his own opinions and maintained a steadfast and unswerving loyalty to his exiled King.

As might be expected after such an upheaval, the whole of

\* See “ The House of Lyme,” pp. 360–366.

## LYME LETTERS

England was in a very unsettled state, and great alarm was being caused even in the remote districts of Cheshire and Lancashire by troops of armed men, who were scouring the country in all directions.

“This day I hear there’s a regiment of Horse coming down and are to be quartered hereabouts,”

his agent reports to Peter from Haydock, his Lancashire property, evidently fearing that horses and food may be requisitioned :

“Part is come this day already, and the rest are coming after. Their horses are very ill foyled [defiled] with their march, and ’tis said that if they want they must be furnished before they go, which makes me fearful to keep your stoned horse\* here, so that to prevent what might happen, I have sent the bearer away with him, hoping he may be safer at Lyme than here. I hear there’s a half a troop to be sent to Bold, another to Garswood, I doubt you must not go scot free neither in Newton nor Haydock.”

The Jacobite influence was very strong. There were murmurings and discontents, whisperings of plots and conspiracies, and treason stalked furtively throughout the land. Men had to tread warily and above all things not commit themselves by letters :

“Deare Pee, I long to see you,” writes Lettice Bankes from Winstanley on March 24, 1688-9,

“Wee have several things to tell you which it is not convenient to write, so all I can say is the Lord grant us a happy Meeting and many peaceful days.”

It was in Ireland that James II hoped to arrest the progress of William, and here, as in Scotland, William had to fight for his Crown. James sailed from France to Kinsale, hoping to head a revolt that should spread over the whole country.

“Vast preparations are making for King William going for Ireland where in all probability work will be found for him,”

a correspondent reports from London to Lyme on March 11, 1688-9;

“Last night an Express came from Admiral Russell † signifying that

\* Stallion.

† *Russell*, Edward, First Earl of Orford (1653-1727), Admiral of the Fleet.



## LYME UNDER WILLIAM III

the French Fleet, consisting of between 40 and 50 Men of War with Tenders had passed the Lands End making directly for St. George's Channel, and on board is believed to be Count Lauzun \* with ye 10,000 men and all preparations for a Campaign, yt have lain at Brest some while in order to be transported for Ireland. . . . We may expect to hear of Action both by Sea and Land in short time."

The following letters were written in the spring of 1689 1689 by Will Bankes, from the House of Commons, to his brother-in-law, Peter Legh at Lyme :

" April 2, 1689.

" DEAR SIR,

" Things look but so-so. Since Thursday last we have had some play days 'tis true. We sat yesterday and this, but had little business. There hath been several Reports of King James's death for these few days, and today it ran through the town afresh, in so much that wagers upon great odds are laid almost in every public house of the certainty of it. I believe they have no other reasons for it only this, not knowing where he is in this world, they conclude he's in another."

" April 4.

" DEAR SIR,

" As reports here are often contradicted, so that of King James being dead was yesterday set aside by letters from Bristol to the Secretary of State, positively affirming upon Oath before the Mayor of that place, that they saw him received at Cork in Ireland with great Joy and Acclamations by the Magistrates there, who met him some distance from the Place and attended him into the Town with a great number of young Females dancing in white before him. That it being the Assize week there, sentence for Treason was passed upon several that had been in arms of the Protestants, and they were accordingly executed, this was what the Letters reported.

" This morning Marshall Stormbergh,† his son, and Monsieur Bentinck ‡ took the New Oathes in the House of Commons in order to Naturalization. Monsieur Stombergh desired the Speaker to return his humble thanks to the House for the favour they designed him in

\* *Lauzun*, Antonin Nompar de Caumont Count, afterwards Duc de Lauzun (1633-1723), Marshall of France; chiefly celebrated for the passion which he inspired in Mademoiselle de Montpensier, the "grande Mademoiselle." He was given the command of 6000 troops in the expedition organized by James II, but this expedition failed.

† *Schomberg*, Frederick Armand, Count, then Duke (see note, p. 138).

‡ *Bentinck*, William, First Earl of Portland (1649-1709), Gentleman of the Bedchamber to William III.

## LYME LETTERS

admitting him to the Privileges of an Englishman, and that he should always be ready with his life and fortune to serve Their Majesties and the Kingdom in defence of the Protestant Religion."

A MS. copy of the Coronation Oath administered to the new Sovereigns on April 12, 1689, was sent down to Lyme, where it is still preserved. This had been newly worded for the occasion :

"Archbishop. 'Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the people of this Kingdom of England and the Dominions thereunto belonging according to the Statutes in Parliament agreed on and the Laws and Customs of the Realm?'

King and Queen. 'We solemnly promise so to do.'

Archbishop. 'Will you to your power cause Justice in Mercy to be executed in all your Judgment?'

King and Queen. 'We will.'

Archbishop. 'Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God, the true Profession of the Gospel and the Protestant Religion established by Law, and will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of this Realm and to the Church committed to their Charge all such Rights and Privileges as by Law do or shall appertain unto them or to any of them?'

King and Queen. 'All this we promise to do.'

After this the King and Queen laying their hands upon the Holy Gospel shall say :

'The Things which we have before promised we will perform and keep, so help us God.'

Then they shall kiss the book."

The new Sovereigns took a great fancy to Hampton Court, and immediately began substantial alterations to the palace and the building of the existing suite of State Apartments, from designs supplied by Wren, in emulation of the splendours of Versailles. Unfortunately this resulted in the masking and disfigurement of much of the old Tudor palace. That the work cannot have been altogether satisfactory, and that there were jerry-builders even in those days, we gather from an entry in Luttrell's "Diary" for December, 1689, which states that

"Part of the new buildings at Hampton Court are fallen down, occasioned by the lightness of the wall, and killed 3 or 4 men and hurt several."



## CHAPTER XXI

### DOMESTIC DETAILS AND FAMILY LIFE

THE happy married life at Winstanley of Will Bankes and 1689 Lettice was clouded by her persistent bad health. This seriously interfered with Will's work and necessitated his having to absent himself from important meetings and gatherings in order to be with her during her frequent attacks of illness. The Lancashire climate, no doubt, had much to do with the rheumatism, chills and agues that she suffered from continually. When one thinks of what the intense cold of a large country house in the north of England must have meant, with no means of warming it apart from fires, it is not surprising that a delicate woman, to whom warmth and sunshine were as necessary as the air she breathed, must have suffered intensely during the long dark northern winter. It is only surprising that she should have survived at all.

Will proved himself a most excellent and devoted husband, nursing Lettice with the greatest care and tenderness during her many attacks of illness. She had accompanied her husband to London some time in February 1688-9, and while there contracted a severe chill which laid her up for many weeks.

“My Wife with walking out one cold night after rain and without hoods, hath gott such a cold that she hath been in Bed these two Months and is very weak . . . this proves very unfortunate to us. God send us once well again.”

he writes to Peter in the first days of April, 1689. The next letter, dated April 25 of this same year, gives a better report :

“My Wife is now, God be thanked, past the great danger she hath been in ; I think she was as ill as 'twas possible to be, and alive, so the rest here thought that saw her.”

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The invalid had been nursed by Mrs. Potts, for many years the faithful old friend and servant to both Legh and Chicheley families, whose whole life was spent in their service. No interesting family event ever took place without her cheering and comforting presence, and she was besides a help and confidant to the young people in their love affairs and shared all their joys and sorrows. But her own health was evidently failing and Will reports her as "declining fast and not in all probability long for this world, as our Doctor and Apothecary tell us."

1689 By May 4 Lettice was sufficiently recovered to be able to "take the air" at Hampstead, where she and Will and "Sister Betty" passed the afternoon of May 4, 1689, "in order to prepare her for her journey to Richmond (beginning of next week) where I have taken Lodgings for her." He describes the poor thing as

"pretty hearty, only troubled with her cough, but very thin and pale, which I believe you'll not think strange, considering she hath never been well this fourteen weeks, a great part of which time she kept her bed."

A month's change to Richmond proved of some benefit to the invalid, but she got a fresh attack of illness early in June, and we hear of more rheumatism and pain in her neck. To the drastic remedy of blood-letting was now added the terrible treatment of blistering, and these were applied together to the unfortunate Lettice, already so weak and reduced that she could scarcely stand:

"My wife is much troubled with a pain in her neck which made me fear lest her Rheumatism should return, so I came to town and sent her Doctors to Richmond, who advise her to blood, which yesterday she did, and at night apply a blistering Plaister betwixt her shoulders, which she observed. This morning she was very sore with it, but she could not experience that it had eased her of the pain."

A letter of June 13 reports a further attack of illness, "a touch of her former distemper," and some idea of a visit to Bath which no doubt would have been beneficial to the poor sufferer. She was evidently getting very weary of her long-

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continued ill-health, and some difficulty was experienced in persuading her to take the remedies prescribed by the doctors: "How they will advise I know not, for she takes no physick," but the devoted husband is anxious to do all and anything to restore her to health: "Whatever they prescribe I shall readily join in, either by going thither [Bath] or any other place."

As the summer advanced Lettice's health improved. Her youth was in her favour, and the change from the damp and cold of Lancashire and the visit to Richmond worked wonders. The poor invalid seems to have made a good recovery, and to have been able to return to Winstanley completely restored to health. Her sister Betty spent a good deal of her time with the young couple, although her mother, who expected and exacted much attention and waiting on from all her children would not spare her for very long.

"I brought Sister Betty hither with me [from Richmond] by Madam Legh's commands,"

writes Will Bankes to Peter from London,

"but I hope she will give her leave to go back with me today."

He reports his mother-in-law as having gone to visit her great friend, Lady Derby,\* to congratulate her on her appointment as Groom-of-the-Stole† to the new Queen, and while sitting with her, she would no doubt pour forth her woes and ask Lady Derby's advice as to the management of her children. She could never realize that they were growing up and that she could no longer keep them in leading strings, for children were beginning to emancipate themselves from the rigid discipline and strict supervision of former days, and Madam Legh's were no exception to the general rule. They much resented the eternal fault-finding and interference to which they were subjected. Madam Legh's masterful nature was always asserting itself, and was the cause of many disputes between her and

\* *Lady Derby*, Lady Elizabeth Butler, daughter of Thomas, Earl of Ossory, married, 1673, William, Ninth Earl of Derby, by whom she had issue one son, who died unmarried in 1700, and two daughters. Lord Derby died in 1702, and was succeeded by his brother James, who rebuilt Knowsley. Lady Derby died 1717.

† Queen Mary conferred this post upon Lady Derby. It carried with it £1,000 a year and gave precedence over Duchesses.

## LYME LETTERS

her children, of whose attitude towards her she was continually complaining.

She had on one occasion returned to Fanny, with a severe reprimand on her bad handwriting and "scribbling," a letter written by the latter to her mother. The poor girl went in deep distress to Mrs. Langley,\* expecting to receive from her the sympathy she always gave the young people in their troubles. But Mrs. Langley was bound to confess, after seeing the letter, that Madam Legh had good cause for her rebuke, as "there was never any writ like it, I intend to keep it as long as I live that it may rise up in judgment against all women for pretending to writ."

Madam Legh was at this time much occupied with and concerned about her third daughter, Fanny, who had, for the moment, escaped from her mother's vigilant and critical eye, and was paying a visit by herself to Lyme, where she was much enjoying her freedom. Frances, Franke, or Fanny, she was called by all three names, was born on June 5, 1667, and was therefore now of age and rather inclined to assert her independence. She was probably not born at Lyme, as there is no entry of her birth in the Disley parish registers. For us she is a shadowy and elusive personality. There is no authentic portrait of her, and very few of her letters are in existence, so she remains a colourless and unreal personage with no individuality. She must certainly have been of a flirtatious disposition and very attractive to the opposite sex; she had many admirers hovering around her, and her mother was much afraid of her falling a victim to some adventurer, to whom her "portion" would no doubt prove seductive.

"I would have you and your wife to consider what ill desines these people may have upon yr sister Fanny,"

Madam Legh writes to her son in an undated letter some time in April 1688 or 1689,

"knowing she has her portion in her own power if she marry a tinker; I would rather she was bared a-life [buried alive] then she should be

\* The Chicheleys' housekeeper.



## DETAILS AND FAMILY LIFE

so cast away, and Stockport neighbours will soon make a talk, and that may bring great disgrace upon yr Sister that it may hinder better matches from coming to her."

Her elder sister Betty, who was just one year older, having been born in May 1666, was of a sweet and amiable disposition, and far the most lovable of all Richard's daughters. She was also in much request amongst her many relatives. After Lettice's marriage she became her mother's right hand, and the greatest help and comfort to her in any family quarrels and disputes (of which there were many), ever trying to smooth matters over and keep the peace. She always managed to get the right side of the irascible old lady, and was her confidant in all her troubles.

There are several portraits at Lyme of Betty Legh by Sir Godfrey Kneller, for she was evidently considered the beauty of the family. These show her to have been a very lovely girl. Her head is beautifully set on her shoulders; she has an oval face, with large dark, almond-shaped eyes, a well-cut and chiselled nose, and a pouting, rose-bud mouth. She has masses of dark chestnut hair—the family colour—which grows low on her forehead, and a very pink-and-white complexion.

Peter, who seldom left Lyme, found her most useful in carrying out his commissions, and as she idolized her brother, and was always thinking how best she could please him, she executed his commands with promptitude and despatch, and entirely to his satisfaction. He did not scruple to give her any amount of trouble, from the ordering of an expensive saddle, which was to cost over £30, without the embroidered cover (which Frances was going to work herself at Lyme), down to the purchase of a "bagganet" (bayonet) and four pounds of the best powder, which she concludes will serve his shooting through the winter. This the devoted sister was to bring him down in her own box! She admonishes him to be "very careful of meddling with it by candle-light!"

"DEAR PETER," she writes,

"How transported was poor I to be in hopes to see you so soon again. Raily dear Peter, I could be very willing to give so much of

## LYME LETTERS

my portion to have you here a little. Why should not we enjoy a little of ye world in one's younger days. Well God prosper you and make you as happy as ever people was in this world. I can never thank you enough for your letter. Adieu dear Peter—E. L.”

Peter's clothes were always made in London and sent down to Lyme, ordered by different relatives. We hear of four pairs of stockings made for him at Nottingham, two pair for himself, one pair for his Uncle Thomas and one pair for his cousin, Frank Cholmondeley.

“I wish they be to your minde, if they are, it's full satisfaction to me for them,”

says one relative. “Thread bridles, that are very useful to you when you hunt ” he would also have sent, but is unable to get them made.

A tailor's bill of £17 12s. 7½*d.*, gives some rather interesting and instructive details. Thus the making of “a fine Cinnamon Coloured Camlet \* Coate, stript with black, Silk waistcoat and velvet breeches,” was to cost sixteen shillings; but most ingeniously, innumerable items, indispensable to the construction of the garment, canvas, buckrum, stay tapes, silk thread and galloon, lining, calico, and “firret † ribbon to tye ye breeches ” mount up the actual cost of the suit to £10 8s.

Here are the prices of some of the above mentioned items :

|                                                            | £ | s. | d.          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---|----|-------------|
| “ 8 dozen silk & silver buttons at 12 <i>d.</i>            | . | .  | 8.          |
| 9 dozen ½ Coat buttons at 10 <i>d.</i> dozen               | . | .  | 7. 11.      |
| 5 yds. ¼ Camlet for ye Coat at 8 <i>s.</i> per yard        | . | .  | 2. 2.       |
| 4 yards pertian to line ye Coat at 4 <i>s.</i> 9 <i>d.</i> | . | .  | 1. 1. 4½    |
| 5 yards silke for the Waistcoat at 9 <i>s.</i>             | . | .  | 2. 5.       |
| 3 yards pertian to Line ye Waistcoat at 4 <i>s.</i>        | . | .  | 14. 3.      |
| Callico to Innerline ye Waistcoat at                       | . | .  | 3. ”        |
| 2 yds. ½ Velvet for the breeches at 12 <i>s.</i> p. yard   | . | .  | 1. 10. ”    |
| Silver thread for the holes of the Waistcoat and breeches  |   |    | 6. 6.       |
| Firret ribbon to tye ye breeches                           | . | .  | 1. ”        |
|                                                            |   |    | <hr/>       |
|                                                            |   |    | £9. 0. 0½ ” |
|                                                            |   |    | <hr/>       |

\* *Camlet*, also written *camblet*, a fine woollen material, made of camels' hair.

† *Ferret*, a kind of narrow tape, sometimes called galloon.



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An overcoat, costing £5 19s 2d., was needed to go with the fine cinnamon coloured camlet coat :

|                                                                  | £           | s.  | d. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----|----|
| " Making a fine Dropdeberrie Cloth Sartout Coat with             |             |     |    |
| plate buttons & silver holes . . . . .                           | „           | 9.  | „  |
| Canvas buckram and stay tape . . . . .                           | „           | 1.  | „  |
| Silke thread and galoon . . . . .                                | „           | 3.  | 6. |
| 4 yds. $\frac{1}{2}$ blew Ratteen to line ye Coat at 8s. . . . . | 1           | 16. | 4. |
| 3 yds. $\frac{1}{4}$ Cloth at 17s. p. yard . . . . .             | 2           | 15. | 8. |
| Silver thread for the button-holes . . . . .                     | „           | 10. | „  |
| Boyling the buttons & 4 plate buttons for ye cape . . . . .      | „           | 4.  | „  |
|                                                                  | <hr/>       |     |    |
|                                                                  | £5. 19. 2." |     |    |
|                                                                  | <hr/>       |     |    |

Two livery coats, evidently intended for the servants, cost 12s. 6d. the pair.

The coat was apparently not a success; Will Bankes, who was responsible for it, writes in much concern at the failure of his commission :

"I am sorry you should be so disappointed in your Coat. I cant imagine how the silly Fellow made such a mistake so soon after he had fitted you before. I gave him directions that it should be made the size of the former. I will go to him and know the reason."

The necessary alterations and rectifications were, however, carried out for the modest sum of 2s. 6d., and the bill, sent in on June 2, was paid with commendable promptitude on the 15th, the tailor making several mistakes in the adding up, which, needless to say, were not to his own detriment.

## CHAPTER XXII

### A WEDDING AT LYME

1689 IN December 1689, undisturbed by the Revolution and the war now raging in Ireland, a happy Christmas party was assembling at Lyme. A wedding was to be added to the other festivities, great preparations were being made, and numbers of relations and friends, many Members of Parliament amongst them, were expected, so the house was to be filled to overflowing.

“ You are like to have a great crowd from our house to be with you at Xmas,”

Will Bankes writes on December 17, he himself, however, being detained in London by his Parliamentary duties, which he hoped would allow of his joining the merry party when he could obtain “ release.”

After giving her mother and other relatives a certain amount of anxiety owing to what they considered to be her giddy and frivolous demeanour, Fanny made choice of a most charming and suitable bridegroom in the person of a friend and neighbour, Robert Tatton of Wythenshawe, some few months younger than herself. He was the grandson of Robert Tatton of Wythenshawe (by his wife Mary, daughter and co-heir of William Brereton of Ashley), a distinguished Royalist, who was Sheriff of Cheshire in 1645, and who sustained the siege of Wythenshawe by the Parliamentarian soldiers, described in a subsequent page.

Fanny's selection was highly approved of by all her family, and even her critical and capricious mother could find nothing to say against so obviously suitable a match. Everybody was to have new clothes, and neither money nor pains were to be spared to make the occasion the most brilliant success. Madam Legh sends down from London a box of finery for her two



## A WEDDING AT LYME

younger daughters, Margaret and Isabella, generally called Peg and Belle, now aged twelve and nine years old respectively :

“ I have sent a box for the two little garles with something for their heads to make them a little fine, I think one of those with long ends may become Peg and that without will become Belle : the prices are in the box, they must have money of Legh [Legh Bowdon, the agent] and what they do not take must go back to Mr. Birom with the box, and this money is to go with the rest to him.”

Sir John Chicheley had hoped that his sister's irritation against him over the Newton election would have subsided, and that he and Lady Chicheley might be able to join the Christmas party.

“ I shall make my journey towards your part of the world in case all is in peace amongst us,”

he writes to his nephew early in December. But he evidently found it more prudent not to venture where he might not be made welcome, so he abstained for this reason from attending, though full of gratitude to his nephew for asking him :

“ You are extreame kind in wishing us at ye wedding, but for some reasons 'tis better as 'tis. Our hearts and best thoughts are with you. When you are in all yr jollity and mirth, wish us shearers. . . . From you we expect an account of ye wedding with all its passages, as also who besides the bride and bridegroom seem to be the most satisfied at the wedding.”

He ends by sending service to his dear niece, “ and where you judge 'twill be acceptable,” leaving it to his nephew to extend the olive branch or not as he thought best.

Old Madam Legh had gone down to Lyme early in the month, coming from London by coach as far as Lichfield, where “ saddle horses ” were to be sent to meet her, she intending to do the remaining fifty miles or so on horseback. Lettice Bankes, now at Winstanley, where her sister Betty was staying with her, was of course to join the party. She seems to have chosen to come by Manchester, some fifteen or twenty miles distant from Winstanley, and, according to present-day roads, this would have been a far longer route than that by Warrington,

## LYME LETTERS

necessitating spending a night on the way. The distance from Winstanley to Lyme at the present day is about forty miles.

The roads being so bad, six horses were required to drag the heavy coach, and Peter had evidently offered some of his own, which kind offer Lettice gratefully accepts :

“ Winstanley, December 20, 1689.

“ DEAREST BRO:

“ Since you have been so kind as to proffer us your assistance to conduct us to Lyme, we now humbly desire you to send your Coach Horses to Manchester upon Friday night next (if you can spare them that is) for upon Saturday we designe to meet them there, and to be at Lyme that night, God willing; my Mother desires my Aunt Legh \* to send her Double Horse for Sister Betty and pray let Dick Browne or Rowley come with him, and if you please bring the saddle and Harness for the 2 foremost Horses and a Postillian; we being forc'st to put 6 Horses into the Coach and have but harness for 4; soe desire you to lend us yours; we have noe boy that knows how to ride postillian, soe if one of these come with my Aunt's Horse and Harness, 'twill be a great kindness. Our Coach is so heavy and the ways so ill that 4 they say can never bring us to Manchester; our ways hereabouts are the worst; we are to lye upon Fryday night at Mr. Kenyon's † to be att Manchester as soon as we can upon Saturday. All here are your servants, 'tis late, soe hope the hasty scribble will be excused. I am, dear Peter,

“ Your most affectionate sister,

“ L. Bankes.

“ . . . I have no hopes of Mr. Bankes coming down till he can get release for a longer time than an adjournment will allow; the sooner my Aunt's horse comes the more rest it will have before Fryday.”

The Winstanley party would include, besides Lettice and her sister Betty, her mother-in-law, Mrs. Bankes ‡ senior, and probably several of Lettice's brothers and sisters-in-law. They were a large family and spent a good deal of time at Winstanley, where Will and Lettice were always glad to see them. The party coming to Lyme might therefore well consist of six or seven persons, not counting the attendants, maids and lackeys,

\* *My Aunt Legh* is probably Frances' mother, Mrs. Abigaile Legh, widow of Peter Legh of Bruch (see note, p. 147).

† *Mr. Kenyon*, the family lawyer.

‡ *Mrs. Frances Bankes* (see note, p. 143)





WYTHENSHAW HALL, CHESHIRE

*By permission of Mrs. Tatton of Wythenshawe*





## A WEDDING AT LYME

without which no coach load ever started on a journey of any length. As a stop of one night was necessary, it would need a certain amount of arranging and managing to provide sleeping accommodation for all.

The wedding took place at Lyme on January 1, 1689, a favourite date for weddings, Richard and Elizabeth having also been married on New Year's Day twenty-eight years before. Amidst a chorus of good wishes, blessings and fervent prayers for their happiness, the young couple departed that cold January day from Lyme for Wythenshawe, which was to be Fanny's future home.

The offshoots of the house of Lyme were planting themselves close round the parent tree as if they could not bear to leave the shelter of its branches. Lettice at Winstanley and Fanny at Wythenshawe were still within very measurable distance of their beloved Lyme.

Wythenshawe, a beautiful old Elizabethan many-gabled, partly timbered house, is situated between Altrincham and Stockport, about sixteen miles distant from Lyme. It came into possession of the Tatton family in 1371, and has seen many stirring events since the period of its first erection. In 1530 it was burnt to the ground, and a curious deed of that date, still preserved by the family, states that "Robert Tatton (whom Godde helpe), did re-edifie Withinshaw after it was burnt."

The house was besieged during the Civil Wars, and from November 1642 to February 1643-4, a space of a year and a half, it was kept more or less in a state of defence by the Robert Tatton of the day, the grandfather of Fanny's husband. One shot, which is still to be seen, even penetrated the wall of the beautiful Elizabethan panelled drawing-room. In the end of the eighteenth century six skeletons were found lying together in the garden, supposed to have been the remains of soldiers buried during the siege. There is a tradition that one of the soldiers of the Parliamentary army, who had exposed himself by sitting on a wall, was killed by one of the maids in the house (some say by Mrs. Tatton \* herself), who had begged to be allowed to fire at him.

\* See p. 174.

## LYME LETTERS

Wythenshawe was probably redecorated, or in the language of the day "re-edified," for Fanny's reception, as the Legh coat of arms appears in a beautiful stained-glass window in the drawing-room. We have no further details of the marriage, and can only picture to ourselves the arrival of the bride and bridegroom, their united ages being only forty-two, to take up their abode and begin life together in the charming old house, the home for generations of the Tatton family.

1690 But sorrow was treading hard upon the heels of joy. The Christmas party had not yet dispersed, and the feasting and merry-making were still at their height, when, barely one week after the wedding-day, comes a letter from Frank Cholmondeley,\* written from London on January 7, 1689-90, reporting the serious illness of poor Will Bankes. He had never managed to get down to Lyme, and must have been taken ill about the very day of the wedding, with what appears to have been a severe chill and gastric attack, accompanied by high fever. Two doctors were in attendance, and the usual drastic remedies were being administered :

" . . . Poor Will Bankes's purging ended in a Fever . . . last night he was blistered, shoulders and arms, with very good success, which restored him to a good temper, and leave us without doubt (by God's blessing) of speedy recovery and health. He hath now Dr. Radcliffe,† had before Dr. Baynard ; ‡ Dr. Berwick is blinde and cannot practise."

Two days later, on January 9, the patient is reported as being beyond hope of recovery. Apparently he had taken a turn for the better, and poor Lettice was informed that all danger was over and that her coming to London would not be necessary. A relapse set in, however, and the case seemed hopeless :

"I have time to let you know," says Frank Cholmondeley, "yt it hath pleased God to remove our hopes of my d. friend's recovery, for upon Tuesday our hopes were such from ye good night before,

\* See n. p. 65.

† *Radcliffe*, John (1650-1714), physician; attended the Royal Family, but gave mortal offence to Queen Anne by styling her complaint the vapours.

‡ *Baynard*, Edward, M.D. (1641-1718), was an advocate for cold baths.



## A WEDDING AT LYME

and yt day we thought all danger over, and so I writ to my poor Coz [Lettice at Lyme] for whom my very heart bleeds : I fear he'l not be alive tomorrow night, his head is so disturbed, yt he can get no sleep for a day and a night past. Ye distemper rejects all medicine, tho' blisters run as well as Can be wish't . . . and yet no relief."

On January 11 Frank Cholmondeley sends the news of poor 1689-90 Will's death, which took place the day before, January 10, "whose breath ceased with ye Comendatory prayer about a quarter past eight in ye morn."

Apparently Will had refused to call in a doctor until too late, though, considering the nature of the remedies administered, the result would probably have been the same :

"his unhappy aversion to a physician let ye distemper run too long till no medicine had its effect but blistering, which as I told you in my last, had those good effects, and brought him under such good symptoms, yt upon Monday we all thought ye bitterness of death was over, but alas ! it proved but a glimmering of hopes, ye night following turned it into Wormwood, and from that tyme to his death, he never shut his Eyes until 3 hours before his fatal minute."

In these days, when a telegram or telephone message will bring anyone from John O'Groats to Lands End within a few hours, it is almost impossible to realize the mental agony that must have been experienced by the recipients of an urgent summons to come without delay, having before them the prospect of a journey that must occupy, at the very least, four, five or even six days. Poor Lettice, summoned from Lyme, hurried to her husband as fast as the slow travelling of the day admitted, but did not arrive in time to find him alive. Her grief was overwhelming, coupled also with a strong feeling of resentment at not having been sooner informed of her husband's serious condition :

"My poor dear Coz, your sister," writes Frank Cholmondeley to Peter, "is come full of an ungovernable passion which must be vented before any kinde advice can take place, for there's an *Impetus naturae* yt must be satisfied and spent before ye temper can be sedate—which I trust God will perfect in her."

It is to be hoped that the poor little widow had someone

## LYME LETTERS

with her rather more sympathetic than this matter-of-fact cousin, with his uncalled-for advice, but we have no more details.

They brought Will's body all the way down from London to Lancashire. The journey must have occupied some ten days, as the funeral only took place in Wigan church on January 22, 1689-90, when Will was buried at the age of thirty, leaving no children.

Poor Lettice ! her young life wrecked at twenty-six, by the greatest tragedy that can befall a happy married woman, widowed, childless and desolate, after less than two years of cloudless happiness, her sun had indeed gone down while it was yet day.

But another misfortune was to come, for this tragedy was to be followed six weeks later by another fully as great. In February of this same year, not eight weeks after his marriage to Fanny Legh, poor Robert Tatton died at the age of twenty-one, and was buried on the 25th of February, 1689-90, in Northenden parish church. We have no details, merely the bald, bare fact, as stated in the Northenden parish register :

“ 1689. Feb. 25, Robert Tatton of Withenshawe Esqe was Buryed.”

The bride of eight weeks had become a desolate widow at the age of twenty-one,

“ O, giorno, O, ora, O, ultimo momento.”



## CHAPTER XXIII

### TROUBLOUS TIMES

THE MSS. newsletters and private letters at Lyme of the year 1690-1 1690-1, all speak of terrible conditions existing in the army in Ireland. Food was very scarce and prices were prohibitive. Bread, which in this country cost 2*d.*, was 14*d.* there, and other prices were in the same proportion.

The burden of taxation, the pressure of the war, the expulsion of the Non-Jurors, the discontent of the clergy, and, above all, the presence of James II in Ireland, all combined to cause a great reaction in the feeling of the people in favour of their late King. A Jacobite rising was feared, and William III was determined to stamp this out at all costs.

The chiefs of all the Cheshire families were being sent to the Tower. Executions were being carried out practically wholesale, in spite of protests from Queen Mary, who "sent after ye Judgement not to prosecute ye Non-Swearers."

"The reason of my not going into Cheshire at this time is because the Country's something too hot, the Company that I went to see being all secured,"

a correspondent writes to Peter Legh at Lyme in January 1689-90.

The Frank Cholmondeley above mentioned claimed to have 1690 been the first of the Non-Jurors to be made an example of :

"This Day," \* January 8, 1689-90, "was for my appearing where I did, and after I was withdrawn, a debate did arise which continued for nere an hour . . . and at last carried for my Committment to the Tower, where I am to be tomorrow night. So if you'l favour me with a line or two, thither you are to direct it. I am made ye first example of this kind to be imprisoned for refusing ye Oathes."

\* Frank Cholmondeley from London to Peter Legh at Lyme.

## LYME LETTERS

The authorities showed a strange amount of consideration in postponing Frank Cholmondeley's imprisonment, by reason of his attendance on his dying cousin Will Bankes :

"My not going to ye Tower was deferr'd till this day because of my d. Frds Condition and his Lady's coming up, which was an unusual favour. I hear I shall in a short time be expelled ye house and then immediately a writ will issue out."

More, but quite ineffectual pressure was being brought to bear upon Peter to change his uncompromising attitude and take the Oathes of Allegiance to his new Sovereigns. Old Madam Legh writes to her daughter-in-law warning her that there are those ready to "work their spit" [spite] against her husband. But nothing would persuade Peter\* to listen to reason and accept the inevitable,† with the serious consequences to which we have already alluded.

He was paying a visit to his uncle, Sir John Chicheley, in Southampton Square in June 1690, on his way to drink the waters at Tunbridge Wells, where he and Frances were staying at the "Mount Ephraim" in July. His relations were much relieved at his being away from Cheshire "and quiet from the Malice that was designed."

"I hear," writes his uncle Thomas from Lyme, "that at their last Meeting at Prestbury of our Commissioners, the question was put whether—upon this Poll—you should taste of their rigour and Malice."

Mr. Bradshawe of Marple,‡ however, put in a good word for his friend and neighbour on the plea of his youth :

"He desired for this time you might be respited, ye time was not long but you came to ye age of 21, then if your London journey softened not yr present obdurate heart, nor ye irrefragable arguments of a judicious Mother moulded you not to piety, then they had something to say against one so paw [naughty] so awkward and so refractory."

He sends an account of one of Peter's younger brothers, who had been taken with a severe chill :

\* See p. 163.

† See "The House of Lyme," pp. 360-66.

‡ *Bradshawe of Marple*, Henry, second surviving son of Henry Bradshawe the elder, and nephew of the regicide judge; married first, Mary, daughter of Bernard Wells, secondly, Anne, daughter of George Bowden of Bowden, Derby.



## TROUBLOUS TIMES

“My pretty Fair Master is indisposed with a cold, very grievous in both ears,”

his old uncle being much amused at the boy's answer, when asked how he got the cold, which was, “by going to school.”

This was probably Richard, born in 1670. Peter was evidently making inquiries as to preparatory schools for his young brothers. One schoolmaster he had applied to—a certain Mr. Marsden—declined taking any more scholars, “it hindering him from his study of divinity.” Madam Legh recommended a Mr. Shawe, who kept a school at Warrington,

“a very sober man, a quiet good natured man both in the school and elsewhere, the boys generally improve well under him; I heare but of two that he hath sent to the University, but several that he had fitted ready to have gone, had not the distractions of the times prevented them.”

Ultimately Richard was sent to a school at Tattenhall, a village not far distant from Lyme.

Some details about sport, mainly relating to fishing—enough to arouse envy in the breast of any present-day fisherman—are given in an undated letter of about this period. The letter is written to Peter from Stretton, Staffordshire, by one Jo: Congreve :

“I went to ye river Wye (half-way to Lyme) a fishing, where we had ye finest sport I ever saw. We caught above 40 large Trouts in one day. I hope you'll be as good as your word & come to Stretton this summer where I'll undertake to show you as good Pike fishing as most you have seen.”

Practical joking, partaking of a certain amount of vulgarity and horse-play, figure in the amusements of the time. A young man going to stay in a country house makes a serious complaint against some of the young “gentlewomen” visitors, who, he alleges, “plagued him with a crowing cock over his bed.” How this feat was accomplished history does not say, but the young man retiring to rest in the small hours of the morning, the cock began to crow soon after, and the victim of the joke, being presumably too much overcome by his libations of the night before to take any steps to rid himself of the intruder,

## LYME LETTERS

“he got no rest that night.” The narrator, who, on the strength of it, perpetrates a bad pun about “stories of cocks and bulls,” apologizes for these details respecting “country bumpkins.”

1691 On March 20, 1691, Sir John Chicheley died somewhat suddenly in London and was buried on the 23rd in the church of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields. He had all his life been a delicate man, but it was never anticipated that he would predecease his father, Sir Thomas, who had been ill about this same date, but was reported as being so much better “that he can now handle a pair of cards.”

Sir John Chicheley's death created a vacancy at Newton borough, and Peter was immediately besieged by applications for his “interest” there, in support of would-be candidates, that constituency being much sought after. Amongst others, Lord Derby, who had continued the same good friend to Peter as he had been to his father before him, writes from Knowsley on June 2, putting forward the claims of a Mr. Bennet, and incidentally proposing himself and Lady Derby for a visit to Lyme :

“I do resolve to accompany her [his wife] as far as Lyme in her return back, and there thank you for your invitation to a place I have had so long a desire to see again,”

signing himself

“Your most affectionate friend and humble servant,

“DERBY.”

The complete defeat of James II at the battle of the Boyne, in July 1690, and the attempted invasion of England by the French, de Tourville having effected a landing at Teignmouth, decided the country to make common cause against the enemy and to rally round William III, and did more to quell the Jacobite revolt than all William's tyranny. For a time things looked more settled, but affairs abroad soon assumed a serious aspect, and the beleaguering and fall of Mons, the strongest fortress of the Netherlands, by the French, baffled William's hopes and destroyed the people's trust in his fortune.

“Yours with ye terrible account of the approaches of the French Fleet came to me in due time,”



## TROUBLOUS TIMES

writes Thomas Legh to his nephew Peter, a few days before the battle of the Boyne,

“I am morally assured they hate our Church and fight the French King’s battles, not ye King’s of France! I pray let me know how you would have your money disposed. . . . For now all orders are come into the Townshippes and Hamlets, etc., that all their Militia shall be in an hours warning in readiness, and when soldiers are once up, who knows how soon plundering is in fashion.”

He begs to know his nephew’s wishes with respect to the mounted force that he was expected to provide. An old coach horse he fears won’t pass muster, and if this be so, the Lord-Lieutenant may come down upon poor Peter with a fine of £20! His uncle displays much ingenuity as to how the horse should be shown off to the best advantage. He advises Peter to persuade his ordinary trooper or rider to “quit the saddle,” and to let Amos—another servant—“vault into it,” the latter being of a “brisk, vain-glorious spirit, can make an indifferent horse show better than Bennet [the trooper] a good one.”

Later on Thomas Legh reports serious charges against this same Amos, now promoted to an exalted position in the Lyme stables. He seems to have shown himself quite unworthy of the trust reposed in him, and during Peter’s absence at Tunbridge Wells to have been detected in a “scurvy enormity.” This was going on one of Peter’s horses to the “Wakes”\* at Chapel-en-le-Frith—a village some few miles distant from Lyme—to have remained there an unconscionably long time, the horse meanwhile being very warm and “ill set up.” On his return home the culprit was found, hours later, in a drunken sleep, the horse in “a wofull pickle.” Furthermore, one of the young horses having gone suddenly lame, it was supposed to be as the result of “rash and foolish leaping which Amos is too apt to glory in.” It is to be hoped that, on Peter’s return to Lyme, Amos’s further services were dispensed with.

\* *Wakes*. These are annual fairs held in Lancashire and Cheshire towns and villages. They are one of the great events of the year from which dates are often reckoned, and it is customary for friends at a distance to visit each other during “Wakes week.” The towns are in a state of festivity (all workshops being closed), approaching in some degree the carnivals of continental towns. The Wakes always begin on a Sunday and last throughout the week.

## LYME LETTERS

Meanwhile the beleaguering of Mons was continuing. A letter from an unknown correspondent, written to Lyme on April 2, 1691, says :

“There will be no news till we can say Mons is taken or relieved. Most think it is taken. It is said the King will be at home soon, if so, then it will go for truth that Mons is taken. On Tuesday one like a post—an Express—came through the City and at several eminent places of it had the horn blown and then cried, ‘God preserve King William and Queen Mary, Mons is relieved!’ This was only a Contrivance to relieve wagers that had been laid about it.”

The establishment of a Presbyterian Church in Scotland, together with the “rabble” of the Episcopalian clergy in the Western shires, had revived all the old bitterness of the clergy towards the dissidents. A MS. newsletter at Lyme, dated from London on June 27, 1691, shows, however, the peremptory way in which William III dealt with the reverend gentlemen who presumed to dictate to him :

“London, June 27, 1691.

“His Majesty having sent letters to ye General Assembly of Scotland, directing them to moderation towards ye Episcopal Clergy and to make no distinction but to redress ye wrongs done them . . . they returned an answer to His Majesty in Flanders, and sent it by Mr. Lown and Mr. Blare,\* 2 Presbyterian Ministers, who had audience of ye King in his Camp, and told ye King they hoped he would not intrench upon ye power and authority Jesus Christ had given them. To which His Majesty replied that he would not meddle with that, but positively commanded them to obey him.”

The senseless custom of duelling was still in vogue, and any argument or difference of opinion were enough to provoke a serious quarrel. The strong feeling produced by the politics of the day of course provided the hot-heads with ample excuse for drawing their swords, as often as not resulting in a tragedy. A newsletter at Lyme of March 4, 1692-3, describes such an occurrence :

“Two gentlemen of different sentiments relating to the Government, drinking in the Crown Tavern, opposing one-another to that

\* *Blair*, James (1656-1743), Scottish Episcopalian Divine, sent as missionary to Virginia in 1685. President of the Council of Virginia.



## TROUBLOUS TIMES

degree, that the Jacobite declared King James his lawful prince, so drawing, the latter killed the former."

Amongst the Legh papers is a copy of the last declaration of a friend and neighbour, John Ashton, of the family of Ashton of Penketh, Lancashire, Clerk of the Closet to Mary of Modena, a noted Jacobite and a most devoted servant of James II and his Queen. This letter or declaration was written just before his execution at Tyburn, and MS. copies of it were circulated through the country, causing a great sensation and doing much to further the Jacobite cause. Ashton was captured on his way to France, carrying incriminating documents, and was committed to the Tower and executed on January 28, 1690-91. The arguments he uses in support of his action are these: That he considered himself bound by the Laws of God, the Church and the Realm to support his rightful Sovereign, "whatever his principles were or his practises might be," quite irrespective of his personal feelings of affection and devoted loyalty; "And let all the world take notice that in this belief I die." The English is so perfect, the language and sentiments displayed in this remarkable document are so beautiful, that, despite its length, it is here reproduced in its entirety:

"MR. SHERIFF,

"Having observed that ye Method of making Speeches at ye place of Execution was not always attended with ye designed success, and thinking it better to employ my last Minutes in devotion and holy Communion with my God, I have prepared this paper to leave in your hands, as well to assert my Religion as to testify my Innocence.

"As to my Religion, I profess by God's grace to die in ye faith into which I was baptized, that of ye Church of England in whose Communion (nothing doubting of my Salvation through ye Merits of my Saviour) I have always thought myself happy and safe. According to her principles and late much esteemed doctrine (tho' now unhappily Exploded) I have regulated my Life, believing myself obliged by my Religion to look upon my Rightful, lawful Prince (whatever his principles were or his practises might be) as God's Vice-regent, and Accountable (if guilty of mal-administration) to God only from whom he received his power, and always believing it to be contrary to the Laws of God, ye Church and the Realm, upon any pretence whatsoever to take up arms against Him: And let all ye world take notice that in this belief I die.

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“ But I have more particular Obligations to ye King my Master, whom I have had ye honour to serve and received many signal favours from Him for sixteen years past, so yt Gratitude (a thing not much esteemed at this time) as well as Duty and Religion commanded ye utmost service I could pay him. And when I had these Considerations, that we were born his Liege people, that we had solemnly professed our Allegiance and often confirmed it with Oathes; that His Majesty’s usage after the arrival of the Prince of Orange was very hard and severe and (I may say) unjust; and that all ye new Methods of settling this Nation have hitherto made it more miserable, poor and more exposed to foreign Enemies, and ye Religion they pretend to be so fond of preserving is now much more than ever likely to be destroyed; there seemed to be no ways to avoid the impending evils and save these Nations from poverty and distraction but ye calling home our injured Sovereign, who as a true Father of his Country has (notwithstanding all his provocations and Injurys) a natural Love and tenderness for all his Subjects.

“ And I am so far from repining at ye loss of my Life that had I ten 1000 I should rather think myself obliged to sacrifice it all than to omit any just and honest means to promote so good and necessary a work. And I advise and desire my Fellow-subjects to think of their duty and turn to their Allegiance before the severe judgments of God overtake them for their perjury and rebellion. But certainly ye good and Interest of these Nations, abstracted from all other considerations, will ere long convince them of ye necessity of doing it.

“ Having thus frankly declared my principles, I know ye inference will be That I have acted accordingly, and consequently that I am justly condemned. But as I here ingenuously own ye premises, so I positively deny ye Consequence, for whatever my Inclinations and actings have been, yet as to ye Matter I was sentenced to die for, I declare myself innocent, and I Appeal even to ye Judges themselves whether or no upon my Trial there appeared ye least proof that I knew a Tittle contained in ye papers. But presumption was with the Jury though sufficient to find me Guilty, tho’ I am told I am ye FIRST MAN that ever was condemned for High-treason upon bare suspicion or presumption, and that contrary to my Lord Coventry and other eminent Lawyers’ opinions. The knowledge of my own Innocence as to ye indictment and charge against me was that that armed me with so much assurance and occasioned my casting my life upon the first 12 men of ye Panel without challenging any.

“ But tho’ I have, I think, just Reason to complain of ye severe charge given by ye Judges and hard measure I have received, not to mention my close imprisonment, ye hasty and violent proceedings



## TROUBLOUS TIMES

against me, nor ye industry used in ye return of fitting persons to pass judgments upon me, ye denying me a Copy of ye Panel, yet as I hope for pardon and forgiveness at ye hands of God, I do most heartily pray for and forgive them and all my Enemies, all ye world, nay even that Judge and Jurymen who did so signally (contrary to common justice) expose themselves to destroy me. But let ye Will of God be done, I rely wholly upon ye mercy and merits of my blessed Saviour for Salvation, I do cheerfully and entirely resign myself into His hands as into ye hands of a faithful Creator, in sure and certain hopes of a happy resurrection.

“ Bless, protect and strengthen O Lord God my good and Gracious King and Master ; in thy due time let ye virtue and goodness and innocency of ye Queen my Mistress make all their Enemies blush and silence ye wicked and unjust calumnies that malice and envy have raised against Her. Make Her and these Nations happy in ye Prince of Wales whom from unanswerable and undoubted proofs I know to be HER SON. Restore them all when Thou seest fit to their just Rights and on such a bottom as may support and establish ye Church of England and once more make her flourish notwithstanding what she hath received of late from her prevaricating Sons.

“ Forgive, Forgive, O Lord, all my Enemies, bless all my Friends, comfort and support my dear afflicted wife and poor Babes ; be Thou a Husband and a Father to them, for their sakes only I could have wished to have lived. But pardon that this wish O Good God, and take my Soul into Thy Everlasting Glory.

“ Amen.

“ J: ASHTON.”

The rule of the Stewarts may not have been wise, they may have acted unconstitutionally, and the tone of their Court was certainly not a high one, but they possessed in a marked degree that indefinable charm which inspired those sentiments of loyalty and devotion in the men who fought for them and in women who, to serve them, would have gladly died. Who can read without a thrill the famous letter with its proud defiance, a copy of which is among the Legh MSS. and which was circulated throughout the country, sent on July 12, 1649, by James seventh Earl of Derby to General Ireton in answer to a summons to surrender the Isle of Man to the Parliamentary army :

“ I received your letter with indignation and with scorn I return you this answer ; that I cannot but wonder whence you would gather

## LYME LETTERS

any hopes from me that I, should, like you, prove treacherous to my Sovereign, since you cannot be Insensible of my former actings in His late Majesty's service, from which principles of Loyalty I am no whit departed. . . . I scorn your proffers, I disdain your favours, I abhor your treason, and am so far from delivering this Island to your Advantage, that I will keep it to the utmost of my power to your Destruction.

"Take this, your final answer, and forbear any further Sollicitations, for if you trouble me with any more messages on this occasion, I will burn the Paper and hang the bearer.

"This is the immutable Resolution of him, who accounts it his chiefest Glory to be His Majesty's most loyal and obedient Servant

"DERBY.

"Castleton, 12, July, 1649."

Such spirit can never die ! Its flame burns fierce and white in the youth of to-day, and its prototype may be seen in the deathless heroism and glorious self-sacrifice displayed in thousands and thousands of cases during the four hideous years of the World War.

As far as the women are concerned. What could exceed the passionate devotion shown by Jane Lane, Flora Macdonald and hosts of other women who risked their lives and gave their all in defence of those whom they considered their rightful Sovereign.

"Not only am I ready to *venture* life, family and estate, but even *sacrifice* them all for His Majesty's service," was the reply of Colonel Wyndham to a request that he would receive Charles II after the battle of Worcester.

Charles II, who is supposed to have had a short memory for his old friends, certainly never forgot Jane Lane and all that he owed to her. Shortly after the King's escape she and her brother thought it prudent to leave England, landing in France, where they were received with great honour, in December 1651. Charles himself came out from Paris to meet them, accompanied by the Queen-mother and the Dukes of York and Gloucester. Advancing towards Jane Lane, and extending his hand with that graciousness which none knew better how to display, his first words were, "Welcome, my Life !" Charles corresponded frequently with Jane, writing in terms of the deepest regard, and signing himself "Your most affectionate friend, Charles R."



## TROUBLOUS TIMES

At the Restoration he showed his gratitude in a more practical manner by settling £1000 a year on Jane for life and £500 a year on her brother, and presenting the lady also with his portrait and a gold watch with his miniature set in diamonds, which he desired might always descend to the eldest daughter of the house. The most distinguished mark of honour bestowed upon the family, however, was the Royal Grant of Augmentation of the Arms of England added to the paternal coat on a canton, and a crest specially designed to commemorate this historic event: A strawberry roan horse, saliant (the horse ridden by the fugitive King and his companion was a strawberry roan) couped at the flank, bridled sable, bitted and garnished or, supporting between the feet an imperial crown proper, with the motto "Garde le Roi." This crest, with the Grant of Augmentation, has formed part of the Lane family arms ever since.

Fallen grandeur has always aroused feelings of chivalrous devotion. It is possible that her tragic fate may partly have accounted for the halo of romance that surrounds the life of Mary, Queen of Scots, for whom so many fought and died. Her history possesses a more pathetic interest than does that of any other historical personage, Marie Antoinette excepted, and Charles I's faithful adherents were, no doubt, stimulated to greater loyalty by the spectacle of their fallen King.

If I remember right, the devotion of Flora Macdonald to Prince Charlie was such that she left directions in her will that the sheets of the bed he had slept in at Kingsburgh in 1745, which she had carefully preserved, should be wrapped round her body as a shroud at her burial forty-five years later in 1790.

Marie Antoinette inspired adoration in those who had never even seen her. The following charming story relating to this unfortunate Queen, though perhaps well known, may bear repetition.

After the capture of the French Royal Family at Varennes in their disastrous flight from Paris, they stopped to rest at a country house on their return to captivity and ultimate death. The lady of the house waited herself upon Marie Antoinette and

## LYME LETTERS

attended to her wants with her own hands: "Who is the mistress of this house?" asked the poor Queen. "I should like to thank her for her kindness." "*I* was the mistress of this house," replied its châtelaine, "before Your Majesty came into it."

But affectionate loyalty and devotion to the Throne has, thank God, not died out in England, in spite of the Bolshevism which we are always told is so prevalent amongst us. No more striking proof of this could be afforded than the picture which we had before us on the day of Armistice, November 11, 1918:

The two greatest Sovereigns of the world. The one, slinking off from his capital into hiding, dishonoured and disgraced; the other, accompanied by his gracious Consort, driving out from his palace through the dense cheering and delighted crowds, with no escort but two mounted policemen, and no other protection than the love of his people.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### MARRIAGE OF BETTY LEGH

GREAT events were to take place in the Legh family in 1690. 1690 Lettice and Fanny were beginning to lift their heads from the dust, and, with the rebound and elasticity of youth, were taking up their life again. The double tragedy that had darkened the lives of the two poor young widows had called forth the greatest sympathy from all who knew them, and this had done much to soften the bitterness of their sad lot. Lettice had met with much kindness and attention from her family lawyer, who was also her husband's great friend and legal adviser, Mr. Roger Kenyon. He was evidently much esteemed by the whole family, and had been presented by Peter and his Lancashire friends with a fine piece of plate, which he very gratefully acknowledges. Madam Legh had also shown her appreciation for his services in a practical manner; but what evidently touched and gratified him more than anything else, was the present of "a noble Ring" bestowed upon him by Lettice,

"the kindest present that ever was or ever can be made from your dear Sister Bankes in remembrance of my truest friend her husband, never without tears to be mentioned or thought of."

Lettice was living at Winstanley with her brother and sister-in-law, her late husband's successor and his wife, who were both very kind to her, and Fanny was at Wythenshawe. Both sisters were a great deal at Lyme, where they were always welcome. Lettice made herself useful to her sister-in-law by helping her with her needlework and embroidery, of which Frances was very fond:

"Tell her if she have any knotted fringe to make or any other worke that may be done by Candle-light with ease to the eyes, bid her send itt with directions how she would have itt, and I will be sure to observe them and doe her what service I can,"

## LYME LETTERS

she writes to Peter on one occasion. Old Madam Legh also took great interest in her daughter-in-law's embroidery, and was always eager to give her advice—often unasked for and unwanted—on any subject, from housekeeping details down to the matching of silks and colours :

“ I like your worke extremely,” she writes to Frances, “ and I cannot but thinke the more collours it is worked in the finer and richer it looks, therefore I have writ upon all those collours that I like will go well together.”

She even proffers her assistance in the matter of procuring a mate for Frances's monkey. These were bred and kept as pets as we now keep dogs, and are mentioned in the Legh letters during many succeeding generations. The good breeds fetched very large prices, as much as £60, representing about £300 at present-day (pre-war) value. “ Jacko,” “ Pugg,” or even plain “ Monkey ” are names of these pets that occur from time to time.

I believe that I am right in stating that it has been found impossible to train monkeys for the house, so one can imagine what the interiors of houses must have been like with these little creatures allowed to run loose.

Knowing that nothing made the old lady feel more important or gave her greater pleasure than executing some commission, Frances had deputed her mother-in-law to visit “ my Lady Brereton,” who kept a celebrated breed, with the view of arranging a marriage. This was not always easy to manage, the little gentlemen monkeys not being invariably as gallant as might have been expected, or like Barkis—“ willing.” :

“ My Lady Brereton says,” old Madam Legh reports after her visit, in an undated letter to her daughter-in-law,

“ . . . she sent hers to a Jack monkey as little as her own, but the Jack monkey was so unkynd as to bite his Mistress, and if she had not taken it away, she believes he would have killed hers. Therefore I know not how to advise you.”

What happened in this matter, history does not say.

Frances, with admirable tact and good nature, humoured



## MARRIAGE OF BETTY LEGH

the old lady, and took her meddling and advice in perfect good part, so that the relations between mother and daughter-in-law were of the happiest and most harmonious character, as were those of Peter and his brothers and sisters, and Peter did all in his power to make up to both widowed sisters for the husbands they had lost :

“ Dear Sis,” he writes to Fanny soon after her husband’s death, “ I received a letter from my brother T. who says ‘ The widow hath been indisposed but is better,’ I suppose he means you.”

This mode of address, though sounding callous and even rather brutal, was by no means so intended. It was accompanied by anxious inquiries after the health of the invalid, and is only typical of the language of the period. Messages were frequently sent by different members of the family or friends to “ both ye widows,” so it was evidently considered to be quite the right manner of referring to them and their condition.

No grief, however poignant, was allowed to interfere with business or daily life. Men took their bereavements as a matter of course, bowing resignedly to the will of Heaven, and with neither murmuring nor repining at the dictates of fate :

“ I buried my youngest son last week,” John Ward of Capesthorpe \* writes to Peter Legh, in a postscript to a business letter, without other comment of any kind.

September 1690 was to see yet another marriage in the Legh family, this time happily with no such tragic sequel as the two earlier ones, and yet with the elements of a tragedy of another kind. Betty became engaged to Mr. (afterwards Sir Streynsham) Master, an ex-Indian official of some importance. He had been Governor of Madras in 1675, and of Fort George in the East Indies, and was the chief representative of the East India Company in the Bay of Bengal from 1675 to 1680. He seems to have retired, or rather he was forced, owing to intriguing, to do so in 1685, and to have returned to England, where he met his

\* *John Ward of Capesthorpe* and of the Inner Temple (1670–1748–9); an eminent lawyer; was M.P. for Newton, Lancashire, in 1712. His eldest daughter and co-heiress married at Kensington, in 1721, Davies Davenport of Marton and Woodford, Cheshire, ancestor of Brigadier-General Sir William Bromley Davenport, K.C.B., D.S.O.

## LYME LETTERS

prospective bride, who was to become his second wife. His first wife was Diana, daughter of Sir Thomas Bendish of Essex.

Betty Legh,\* who was born, as we have seen, in 1666, would therefore have been twenty-four years of age at the time of her engagement, her bridegroom being fifty. She was painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller † and D'Agar both before and after her marriage, and an interesting detail connected with these portraits is a message sent by Frances Legh to her sister-in-law, after her marriage to Mr. Master, saying that she had spoken to Sir Godfrey Kneller several times,

“but he is so extremely busie at present, yt ye work lies as yet imperfect, but believes he intends to doe it well and as soon as done, you shall know.”

By the end of September all the Legh relations were assembling in London for the wedding. Peter and Frances arrived in good time, and great preparations were being made. Supplies of food and delicacies of all kinds were sent up from Lyme, with, of course, plenty of ale. Uncle Thomas contributes the present of a venison pasty, with strict injunctions to exercise the greatest care in lifting the pie out of the box it was packed in: “ye crust is so short and good that it wont endure hard handling.”

By the terms of the marriage settlements, which were completed on September 17, 1690, £15,000 were to be laid out in land, and £10,000 of that to secure Betty a jointure of £400 a year. ‡

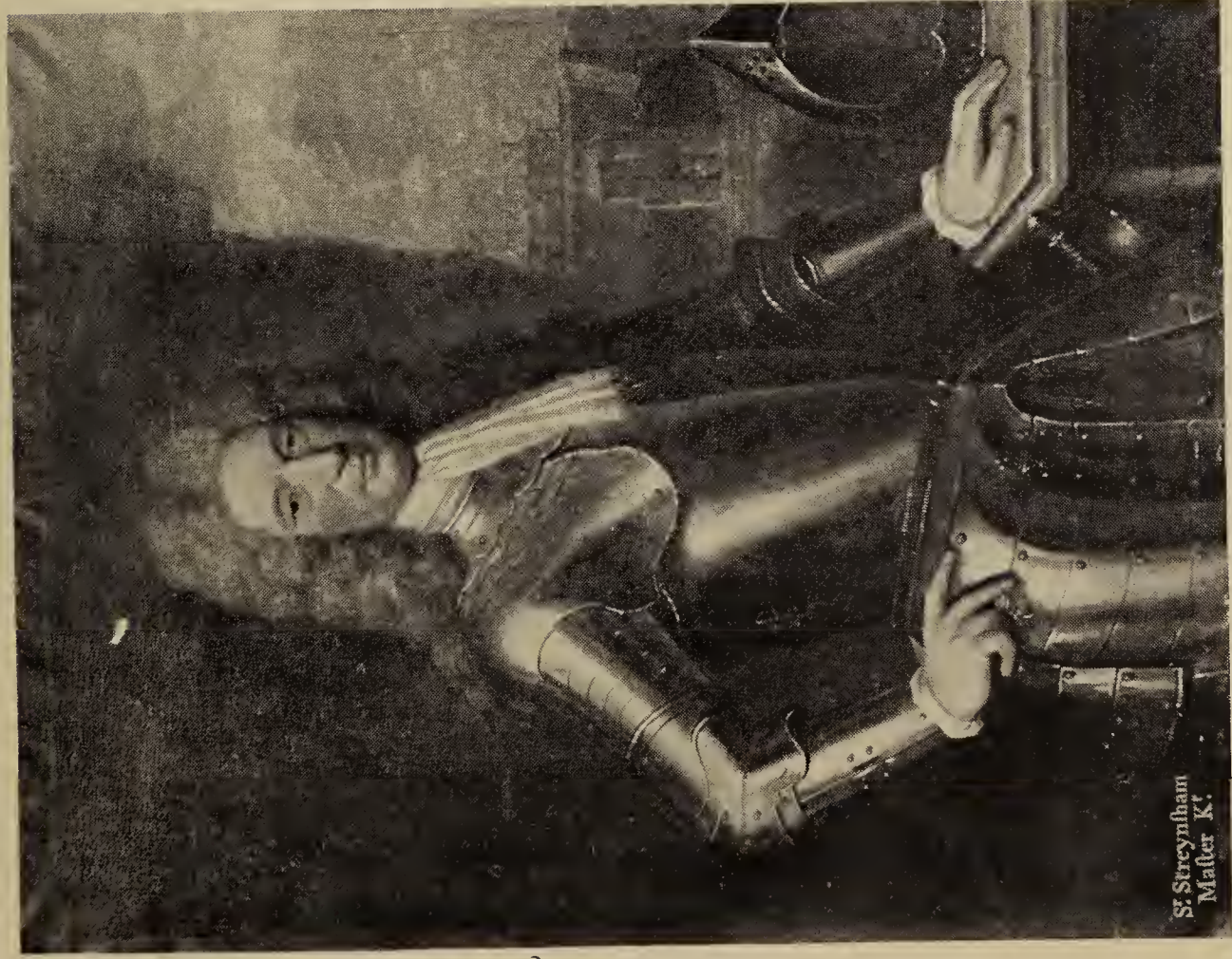
But the courtship of Betty Legh and Streynsham Master was not destined to run very smoothly, for after all the business part was settled, and within two days of the wedding, Betty writes to her prospective bridegroom beseeching him “not to insist more of this business.”

\* From the Disley parish registers: “June 8, 1666, Elizabeth daughter of the right worpl. Richard Legh of Lyme Esq. (my noble patron) and Elizabeth his wife, was baptised.”

† Amongst the Master papers are some bills (£38 altogether) for seven pictures “delivered by David D'Agar,” the prices averaging £5 each. Mr. D'Agar was a portrait-painter of the time. He was Court painter at Copenhagen and came to London in 1700. He died at Copenhagen in 1712.

‡ This would represent £2000 a year at the present day (pre-war rate).





Sir Streynsham  
Master K.

# SIR STREYNHAM MASTER

*From a Painting by J. D'Agar, in the possession of C.  
Onslow Master, Esq.*



LADY, MASTER

# LADY MASTER

*From a Painting, probably by Sir Godfrey Kneller, at Lyme*







## MARRIAGE OF BETTY LEGH

What her objections were, and why she allowed matters to go so far before taking this step, it is impossible to say. But it is conceivable that the young and beautiful girl should not have found either the *beau idéal* of her life or the husband of her dreams in the middle-aged and rather uninteresting man to whom she had given her plighted word. He is described as “worthy, religious, methodical and kindly,” \* but these qualities were scarcely likely to captivate the heart of a romantic girl who may at first have felt flattered by his attentions, and whose gentle nature had yielded to the persuasions and importunities of a sedate and prosaic lover. Realizing that she could not face the ordeal, she was making a desperate effort—even at the eleventh hour—to escape from the fate that threatened her, and writing to her bridegroom in the deepest despair, she flings herself upon his mercy :

“I must still beg of you not to insist more of this business. If you wont for my sake, I beg for God’s sake to put an end to it yourself. I cannot live with this life. I hope I shall end my days in a single life be it never so mean. Indeed Sir, I am sure, if you have that kindness as is Pretended, my request would soon be granted. I am not strong enough to endure much trouble nor to go through a married life, if it were never so easy ; I know my own constitution so well. I must still say nothing will ever make me happy in that life. I fancy I shall always be in this minde for I could never yett bring myself into any tolerable liking for it. Sir, you cannot say that ever I have given you encouragement. . . . I am neither fit to serve God nor man as I am now. For God’s sake Sir, be true to me in keeping this to yourself. I am for ever miserable in this world. Sir, you may take notice of my bad looks. . . . As ever you hope to see God in Heaven, release my troubled heart and mind, and then I will always own myself

“Yr obliged Servant

“ELIZABETH LEGH.” †

She adds that she will gladly pay all the “charges” to be released from her engagement.

This letter, which is endorsed, “Rec<sup>d</sup> from her own hand. September 22, 1690,” was evidently given by Betty to her intended bridegroom at an assembly held in honour of the

\* Hedges’ “Diary.”

† Master papers.

## LYME LETTERS

wedding, and was the outpouring of her troubled heart which she was unable to put into words. The poor man, in great agony of mind, replies as follows :

“MADAM,

“With great trouble and consternation of mind I have this afternoon perused the Paper you put into my hands ye last night, and for your consolation do assure you that this affair (notwithstanding that ’tis advanced to an appointed day and that but one day after this) shall not proceed to an accomplishment without your free and voluntary consent, although I do heartily wish you had sooner expressed that great aversion to it which you now do, and which I am not without hopes you will yet, upon recollecting your thoughts, have some better inclinations unto, considering (as you well observe) how much it consists with your interest and circumstances, to which a small indisposition of mind or body ought to submit.” \*

Assuring her, at the same time, that he will not pursue the matter without her acquiescence and approval and begging that she will not let the question of “charges” trouble her, he signs himself

“Your most affectionate, humble and devoted servant,

“STREYNHAM MASTER.”

The consternation of the whole Legh family must have been great, and one can well imagine the excitement and indignation of old Madam Legh at the sudden rebellious attitude of her gentle and amenable Betty. A considerable amount of pressure was no doubt brought to bear upon the poor girl and her unwilling consent was obtained, for the marriage took place on September 25, three days after her agonized appeal was made. It proved quite a success, and three children were born to the couple, two sons and one daughter, who became in 1715 the second wife of Gilbert, fourth Earl of Coventry. Of her we shall speak later.

1692 The joys of motherhood brought comfort to the heart of poor Betty, and the love of her children provided that nourishment for which her starved soul craved.

\* Master papers.



## MARRIAGE OF BETTY LEGH

“ My daughter Master is so infinitely fond of her nursery that she cannot look off it one hour,”

writes old Madam Legh to her daughter-in-law Frances in 1692,

“ she is a very good nurse and has abundance of milke.”

This was after the birth of little Anne, afterwards Lady Coventry.

Shortly after his second marriage Streynsham Master bought the estate of Codnor in Derbyshire, and here he and Betty lived, with occasional visits to London, where they occupied a house in Red Lyon Square. Betty mentions acquiring the property :

“ This afternoon Mr. Ward \* was here, he come to tell Mr. Master of an estate in Derbyshire that is to be sold, but that they ask three and twenty years purchase.”

Both she and her husband seem to have been unpractical and improvident, and their struggles with ill-health and want of money were a source of great trouble and anxiety both to themselves and their relations. They were continually applying for financial assistance to poor Peter, who had as usual to supply the necessary funds to keep his relations going.

“ I am at this time engaged to pay a sum of money which I know not how to raise,” Streynsham writes in confidence to some friend ; “ I am not willing to be bound, I know noe remedy but to wait Brother Legh’s answer and a supply from him,”

adding, however, that he dreads the ill consequences of running into debt, “ which is next door to a Jayle.”

He was continually engaging in law suits—much the fashion of the day—and these, which were seldom successful, absorbed a great deal of money, which Peter had to find, so that the demands upon his purse and generosity were incessant : “ There is only one thing certain in Law and that is Charges,” was a *cri de cœur* wrung from him on one occasion, when goaded almost to desperation by reiterated appeals, and this statement none will question or challenge. Old Madam Legh spent a good deal of her time with her favourite daughter, Betty Master,

\* See note, p. 195.

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paying her long visits in the country, and seeing more of her than she did of any of her other children.

Fanny Tatton, who it will be remembered lost her husband some two months after her marriage in 1689-90, mourned her Robert for quite two years, but found consolation in a second husband about 1691 or 1692. Old Madam Legh, in a letter to her son Peter, speaks of a Sir Gilbert Clerk, or Clerke, of Chilcote, Derby, a widower with a family, having made an offer for Fanny's hand. The old lady cordially approved of the match :

“ I have acquainted your grandfather [Sir Thomas Chicheley] and my brother Chicheley. He does approve very much of the offer, for here will be a plentiful lefting.”

1693-4      Sir Gilbert Clerke had been M.P. for Derby County in 1685, having then as his colleague Sir Robert Coke, Bart. He also represented Derby County in 1689-90, and sat in the Parliament of 1695 with William, Marquis of Hartington.\* He remains for us as visionary an individual as his wife. Among his very few letters is one written to his brother-in-law, Peter, on January 27, 1693-4, reporting the stormy sessions in the Parliament of the day :

“ I cannot forbear sending you down yesterday's votes and will send you down the representation we have drawn up this day with a design to present to the King by the next post. Some of the Commons that be dissatisfied propose it in another shape than it is now in—being now meek and [undecipherable] good boys.”

Obstruction was being carried on to as great an extent as it has ever attained to at the present day. The Tories were opposed to a continuance of the war, the interest of which had subsided with the pacification of Ireland, and the idea of a subjugation of France by campaigns in Flanders being abandoned. The Whigs, on the whole the stronger parliamentary party, were, however, anxious to continue the struggle. The Exchequer was empty, the Poll Tax had fallen short of the

\* *Hartington*, William, Marquis of, K.G., P.C., fourth Earl; M.P. for the County of Derby; Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire and Lord Steward of the Household; created Marquis, 1694, and first Duke; built Chatsworth; died 1707.



## MARRIAGE OF BETTY LEGH

Estimate by many hundreds of thousands of pounds, and money would have to be found somehow. In devising ways and means a new assessment was ordered for a Land Tax of 4/- in the pound. This caused a general outcry throughout the land. It was thought that it would mean ruin to the landed proprietors—the backbone of England—who would never be able to stand up against such staggering taxation. The following letter will give some idea of the consternation that followed the announcement of this fresh addition to the burdens imposed upon a long-suffering people :

“ No man knows better then yourself how long and earnestly I have endeavoured to ease all ye real estates in England from ye insupportable burden of 4s. in ye pound, which must at last infallibly crush and ruin all ye landed Men, but being without Dooers,\* was deprived of ye means to bring ye same to its wished effect, tho’ almost all the members severally desire ye same thing.” †

Ultimately large grants were obtained for both army and navy, and the expedient adopted for the raising of the last million, whereby subscribers to this amount were to receive life annuities at a high percentage the interest being secured on additional excise duties—was the origin of the National Debt. ‡ In 1693 a bill was carried forming the subscribers into a banking corporation, and this establishment became the Bank of England.

Sir Gilbert Clerke did not long survive his second marriage, and poor Fanny was widowed for the second time about the year 1698, having had two husbands in the short space of nine years. After Sir Gilbert’s death she and her sister Margaret set up house together in Leicester Square. Margaret Legh, or “ Peg ” as she was always called, was the sixth daughter of Richard and Elizabeth, two others having died in infancy. She was born in 1677, and was rather a trial to her mother with whom she did not get on at all. Letters from Madam Legh complain of Peg’s rude behaviour to both her mother and sister Betty, of which iniquity Fanny Clerke seems also to have been guilty.

\* *Doer*, a steward, factor, agent; an attorney employed by a proprietor to manage his legal business. (Wright’s “ Dialect Dictionary.”)

† Sir James Shaen to Sir William Russell, Legh MSS.

‡ Green’s “ History of the English People.”

## LYME LETTERS

Madam Legh puts this down to the evil influence of so-called friends :

“The two ladies in Leicester Square carry with all the affronting manner they can to me and their Sister Master. I pray God defend them from false friends and Flatterers which I fear has designe upon them. . . . My Daughter Master has been indisposed some days, I fear it has been caused by her sisters’ ill nature and ingratitude.”

Betty also complains to Peter of her two sisters :

“We never see those Poor simple Women in Leicester Square, they have been very uncivil to me and my Family. I could not have believed my Sister Clerk would have been so very sharp for nothing. God defend them from Ruin.”

Retribution was to follow Peg’s ill behaviour, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter.



## CHAPTER XXV

### DEATH OF SIR THOMAS CHICHELEY

PETER's first imprisonment in the Tower on a false charge of treason by perjured witnesses (fully described in "The House of Lyme," pp. 361-366) took place in July 1694 and lasted until October of that same year, when he was liberated, no evidence being found against him.

In the new Parliament, which sat from November 22, 1695, 1695 to July 1698, two lawyers, Legh Bankes of Grays Inn (brother of Will), who was of most material assistance to Peter in getting up the evidence for his defence, and Peter's old antagonist, Thomas Bretherton of Gray's Inn, who had been intriguing unsuccessfully for many years, were the chosen candidates, and were returned for Newton borough.

These elections caused great and prolonged excitement. Heads were broken, hard words given and received, and life-long friendships severed as a result of the keen party feeling of the time.

It would be interesting to know whether the fallow deer, of 1696 which there are a certain number in the park at Lyme, are descended from a pair presented to Peter, in March 1696, by Lord Huntingdon,\* and sent from Donington accompanied by a charming letter :

" Donington, 24th of March, 1696.

" SIR,

" There is none more ready to doe you service than myselfe, I am only concerned I want opportunity to express it. I hope the brace of young deer which came from hence may prove well, having passed this severe winter, & if you put into your paddock some of the brightest

\* *Huntingdon*, Theophilus Hastings, seventh Earl (1650-1701); volunteer in the French Army, 1672; imprisoned for attempting to seize Plymouth for James II in 1688; imprisoned again on suspicion of treason in 1692.

## LYME LETTERS

& largest fallow deer does, they will most likely breed of this Issabella Colour and I will take care to rear this year some fawns for you of the same sort.

“ My Wife and myselfe present Our humble Services to you and your Lady & the rest of the Excellent Company with you Being with much respect

“ Your affectionate, humble Servant,

“ HUNTINGDON.”

The Lyme red deer were still in as great demand as ever, and would appear to have helped to stock most of the deer parks in England and Wales. A request from Peter's cousin, William Molyneux \* in November 1692, begs for a brace or two of hinds,

“ which joined with this small herd I now have would set my park in a flourishing condition, and would not I hope be wanted in soe great a number as you have.”

The park he mentions was Charlecote, Warwickshire, famous in Shakespeare's day, which property Mr. Molyneux had acquired through his marriage with Bridget, sole daughter and heiress of Robert Lucy of Charlecote.

But gifts of red deer were by no means the only favours expected by Peter's rapacious relations. His aunt, Mrs. Fountaine (whose original and amusing letters are amongst the most entertaining of the Legh MSS.), styling herself “ a bold beggar,” asks, in an undated letter, first of all for “ a Cock and a Hen of the white Breed I sent you,” and then for “ a horse of small value that will carry my body to visit my daughter † seven miles.” Riding being good for her health, she wishes to “ enjoy a jointure twenty years hence.” ‡ She is not over-modest in her requirements, albeit that the horse should be of small value, he must be

“ a sure footed nagg and a easy pacer, I expect neither youth or beauty

\* *Molyneux*, William, fourth Viscount, succeeded his father Caryll, third Viscount, in 1698-9; by his wife Bridget, had seven sons and five daughters; he died in 1717, his wife having predeceased him in 1713.

† Her only daughter, Elizabeth, married to Colonel E. Clent of Worcester; she had only one daughter who married Edward Price.

‡ Her disagreeable husband died February 1, 1706-7, aged 74, and was buried in the Fountaine vault in Narford Church, Norfolk, where there is a fine monument erected to his memory and to that of Sarah and her daughter, Elizabeth Clent. Her son, Sir Andrew Fountaine, the great connoisseur, who was Chamberlain to Queen Caroline, the Consort of George II, is also commemorated in a monument of pyramid shape, which has his bust on the top.



# DEATH OF THOMAS CHICHELEY

in a horse, but I really cannot afford to buy both horse and saddle. My wait [weight] is the same with your Mother's—a strong pony will do my business better than a fine Barrarie [Barbary] shape, but if dear Lime Park doth not afford one for this purpose I am content, tho' I cannot but wish it might, because I shall not love a Lime horse a little. I hope you will excuse this freedom."

She no doubt obtained the horse, though history does not say.

In February 1698, Sir Thomas Chicheley died, being aged 1698 well over eighty, presumably at his house in Southampton Square, but we have no details. In the Wimpole parish register there appears this entry—the last relating to the Chicheley family:

1698

"Sir Thomas Chicheley, Knight, was wrapt up in woollen & buried Feb: ye 7th whereof an affidavit was made by W<sup>m</sup> Bevan of ye parish of St. Brides in ye City of London & sent from thence to ye Rector of this parish according to ye Act of Parliament in yt Case made and provided."

Born in the reign of James I, he had lived under five Sovereigns of England, dying only four years before the accession of the sixth.

Here, to his beautiful Wimpole, the home he had created, now passed into the hands of strangers, he was brought back that cold winter's day. Here he rests beside his two wives in the "New Vault," containing also his own small sons, the little "pert" maid and other beloved grandchildren, many of whom had passed but from the cradle to the grave. It was fitting that he should be brought back to the beautiful old home to rest amongst his family and forefathers. No mention of his death occurs in any of the Legh letters, but we may be sure that he was truly mourned by his two daughters, and also by his grandchildren to whom he had always been the most beloved and adoring of grandfathers.

Lord Radnor,\* whose father-in-law, Sir John Cutler, had acquired the place in 1686, seems to have behaved with great kindness and consideration, and we hear of him in October of this same year as entertaining some of the Legh family at Wim-

\* *Radnor*, Charles Bodvile (Robartes), second Earl (see p. 10).

## LYME LETTERS

pole, "who made much on us & asked very kindly for you [Peter] and drank all your healths and would have had us to stay'd all night."

1698 On December 14, 1698, Streynsham Master was deputed to present William III with an address of welcome on his return from the Continent. This ceremony took place in the drawing-room at Kensington Palace, when Streynsham was knighted by the King. His mother-in-law, old Madam Legh, sends him a letter of congratulation on his newly-acquired honour. His gratification at its reception had evidently caused him to break out into elephantine humour and the perpetration of an unwonted and somewhat ponderous joke :

" Jan: 6, 1698-9,

" HONOURED MADAM,

" I received your kind congratulatory letter, the 23rd of last month, and have a story of your Daughter to tell you in return. You know she bears the Title of the Lyer of Red Lyon Square, and to keep up to that, she told Cousin Grisell Mainwaring, but a few days before she was a Lady that it was soe to be, not thinking anything of it. Cousin Mainwaring tells this to Lady Chicheley, and so it passes for a design of ours, whereas in truth 'twas pure chance, by falling to my turn to be Chairman of the Court of Directors that week, and so I was to make the Address to the King, which was intended the week before, and then must have fallen to another, but the King not being at leisure it fell a week later than intended.

" Praised be God, your Grandchildren are well at Kensington, whence they come once a week to Town. They have now been there a year, and are very weary, as are all the Nurses of that place. For other matters I crave your reference to other Letters, and wishing you a happy New Year, remaine

" Yr dutiful Son and humble servant

" S. M." \*

As we have already seen, Kensington was a favourite health resort. Queen Anne's eldest son, and one of seventeen children, the little Duke of Gloucester, was delicate from his birth, and spent a great part of his short life, first at Lord Craven's house and then at Camden House, Kensington. In one of the Legh

\* Master papers.



# DEATH OF THOMAS CHICHELEY

MS. newsletters there appears this notice relating to the child, then about three years old :

“ London, May 5, 1692.

“ Saturday being the Queen’s \* birthday, the Prince of Denmark † came to Whitehall to Compliment Her Majesty. An excuse was made for the Duke of Gloucester not coming by reason of the badness of the weather.”

This poor child died at Windsor on July 30, 1700, probably of scarlet fever, at the age of eleven, having been attended by no fewer than four doctors, “ who bled, blistered and cupped him ” [poor little lamb !] “ but to no purpose.” ‡

\* Queen Mary.

† Husband of Queen Anne.

‡ Luttrell’s “ Brief Relation of State Affairs.”

## CHAPTER XXVI

### AN IMPÉRIAL SAVAGE

1698 AMONGST the Legh MSS. are some seventeenth-century news-letters which give interesting details about Peter the Great of Russia, who came to England in 1698 for the purpose of studying the art of shipbuilding. In an evil hour for himself, John Evelyn \* let the Czar his house, Sayes Court, near Deptford, which the Russians so desecrated and destroyed that at their departure Evelyn got £156 compensation. One of the engaging habits of this imperial savage was to have himself trundled in a wheelbarrow across the flower-beds and through the holly hedges in the pleasure-grounds.

The following letter gives an amusing account of the first arrival in British waters of this charming personage, William III having sent two of his own yachts to meet him :

“ London, January 15, 1697-8.

“ When the Czar first came on board the King’s yacht, he immediately went up to the top of the mainmast, where after he had gazed about a little time, he came down again and went directly to his cabin where he continued till his debarquing, not permitting any belonging to the Shipp to come at him, and at his coming out of the Shipp he desired that the men might be put to clean the decks. He refused to come up the river in the King’s barges, but put his retinue on board them and came himself in a mean boat with the Trumpeters and Admiral Mitchell.†

“ A cat may look at a King,” but in the opinion of this gracious personage, an Earl may not look at an Emperor :

\* *Evelyn, John* (1620-1706), virtuoso; travelling companion of the poet Waller in 1646; settled at Sayes Court, Deptford, in 1653; Secretary to the Royal Society, 1672. His “ Diary ” was published in 1818 and 1819.

† *Mitchell, Sir David* (1650?-1710), Vice-Admiral, pressed into the navy in 1672; Captain of the Fleet, 1693; Groom of the Bedchamber; convoyed Peter the Great to England in 1698.



## AN IMPERIAL SAVAGE

“ Nothing appearing so ungraceful to his rough Majesty as to be stared at, and I am told yt he took particular offence at ye Earl of Macclesfield’s \* looking a little too earnest upon him, and rose up and went out of the room in a displeasure.”

Nor was he any more anxious to be exposed to the gaze or wiles of the fair sex :

“ Some ladies of quality have been to visit him, but were refused admittance.”

On February 12, 1697–8, the Czar removed from Norfolk Street to Deptford,

“ where he has taken ye house of one Mr. Eveling ” [Evelyn] “ near to which is a Dockyard for ye building of ships. The King has ordered two of his Yachts to attend his Czarish Majesty to Chatham and where else he pleases, and yesterday Colonel Gibson,† Deputy Governor of Portsmouth received orders from ye King to repair to his Government to receive ye Czar, who is expected will be there in a few daies.”

The following account of an entertainment provided for the Czar is an illuminating example of the habits of the period :

“ On Saturday last the Czar of Muscovy, attended by the Marquis of Carmarthen and some of his Boyers, was at the King’s Playhouse in Drury Lane, and saw 3 acts of the Opera, and from thence was carried by the Marquis to Mr. Morley’s Chamber in the Temple, where ’tis said they drank Sack briskly till 6 next morning.”

The Czar sat for his portrait to Sir Godfrey Kneller, which, according to a newsletter at Lyme of February 17, 1697–8, was

“ drawn to the life at full length in a Roman habit, a Marshall’s Staff in his hands and the Regalias lying by him and shipps storming a fort on the Sea Side.”

In refreshing contrast to the savage and uncouth behaviour of the Russian Czar comes a description in this same newsletter of the charming and courteous behaviour of Louis XIV and the whole of the French Court (which included the exiled James II and his Queen, Mary of Modena) towards the Earl of Portland. ‡

\* *Macclesfield, Charles*, second Earl, (1659–1710) convicted of treason and committed to the Tower in 1683; acquitted; again arrested as an adherent of Monmouth and sentenced to death in 1685; pardoned. Envoy-Extraordinary to Hanover in 1701; buried in Westminster Abbey.

† *Gibson, Sir John* (1637–1717), colonel in the Dutch service, 1675–88; Lt.-Governor of Portsmouth, 1689; M.P. for Portsmouth, 1701–1702.

‡ *Portland, Earl of* (see note, p. 165).

## LYME LETTERS

Lord Portland had been sent by William III as special ambassador to France to treat concerning the Spanish Succession, which question caused a war that convulsed Europe for ten years. With the death of the King of Spain,\* Charles II (now in a dying condition), would end the male line of the Austrian princes, who for 200 years had occupied the Spanish Throne. There were three claimants, the French Dauphin, a son of the King of Spain's elder sister, the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, a grandson of his youngest sister, and the Emperor, who was a son of Charles's aunt. England and France were drawn together by mutual fear. William III dreaded lest Louis XIV, whose army was already on the Spanish frontier, should make himself master of Spain before any serious resistance could be offered; Louis, on the other hand, feared that William might come to an agreement with the Elector of Bavaria.

William's policy therefore was to conciliate France, and this he was attempting by a series of embassies, while it was obviously the right line for Louis to adopt to make much of the English Ambassador. Great attention was attracted by the extraordinary magnificence of his Embassy, to which Prior † was attached as Secretary, while Rapin, the historian, accompanied it as tutor to Lord Woodstock, the Ambassador's son.

Comments were made on the French king's welcoming "*comme une espèce de divinité*," the Ambassador of a Prince whom he had so long treated with every kind of personal hatred and contempt. In spite, however, of all Louis's civility Portland was never able to obtain an interview with Madame de Maintenon, but enjoyed much friendly intercourse with the Duchess Elizabeth Charlotte of Orleans. ‡ A newsletter from London, written in February 1697-8, says :

\* By his Will, Charles II bequeathed the Spanish Crown to the second son of the Dauphin, Philip, Duc d'Anjou, who thus became Philip V of Spain. He abdicated in 1724-1725.

† Prior, Matthew (1664-1721), poet and diplomatist; was employed as secretary in the negotiations at the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697; became Plenipotentiary at Paris in 1712.

‡ Daughter of Philip, Duc d'Orléans, "Monsieur," brother of Louis XIV, by "Monsieur's" second wife, Elizabeth Charlotte of the Palatinate; "Monsieur's" first wife was Henrietta of England.



## AN IMPERIAL SAVAGE

“ Our last letters from France give an account yt his Excellency ye Earl of Portland continues to be treated and caressed at Court after an extraordinary manner. That he had been a hunting with ye Dauphin,\* and was afterwards magnificently treated by him at dinner, and that ye Lord J. Cavendish,† 3rd son to ye Duke of Devonshire,‡ being at ye great ball at ye Duke of Burgundy’s § marriage, and being guessed by ye late King and Queen (who were also present) to be an English-gentleman, they sent to enquire who he was, and being informed, ye French King, who sat near ye Queen, overhearing, rose from his seat and made ye Lord Cavendish a Bow, and sent ye Dauphin down to compliment his Lordship, and conduct him to ye Place where ye first Quality sat, and gave orders yt he should have all ye honours and respect paid him at Court possible.”

In this same letter is an account of the magnificent wedding presents given by Louis XIV to the Duc de Lorraine || on his marriage with Mademoiselle d’Orléans: “ 5 rich pieces of Tapestrie made by ye Gobelins,” the Duke of Orléans’s present being rich furniture of divers sort with “ 9 pieces of Tapestrie of ye manufacture of Persia of an extraordinary beauty.”

This same newsletter contains a rather amusing reference to Lord Mohun,¶ the duellist, who was arrested in 1698 for killing a certain Captain Hill and committed to the Tower, where he

\* *Louis, Dauphin*, eldest son of Louis XIV; married Maria Anna of Bavaria. He died 1711. Was always called “ Monseigneur.”

† *Cavendish*, Lord James, third son of William first Duke of Devonshire; M.P. for Staveley, Co. Derby, and Latimer, Bucks; married Anne, daughter of Elihu Yale, Governor of Fort St. George; he died, 1751, leaving issue.

‡ *Devonshire*, William, first Duke (1640–1707); he was chosen among four young noblemen to bear Charles II’s train at his coronation, April 23, 1661. He married in 1662 Lady Mary, second daughter of James Duke of Ormonde. He began the present Chatsworth in 1687, the work continuing till 1706, the architect was William Talman, Verrio and Thornhill being employed on the painting.

§ *Louis, Duke of Burgundy*, eldest son of the Dauphin; married Marie Adelaide of Savoy. He died in 1712.

|| *Lorraine*, Leopold Joseph, Duke, married Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter of Philip, Duc d’Orléans (“ Monsieur ”), brother of Louis XIV; her mother was Elizabeth Charlotte of the Palatinate, “ Monsieur’s ” second wife.

¶ *Mohun*, Charles, fifth Baron (1675?–1712), duellist, fought his first recorded duel in 1692; arrested for being concerned in the death of William Mountford, but acquitted before his peers in 1693. He entered on a complicated dispute with James Douglas, fourth Duke of Hamilton, challenged the Duke to a duel in which both combatants were mortally wounded in 1712. The Duke was supposed to have received his death wound through the treachery of General Macartney, Mohun’s second.

## LYME LETTERS

had to await his trial for some weeks. He appears to have been somewhat difficult to manage :

“The Lord Lucas, Governor of the Tower, having confined the Lord Mohun, who is a prisoner in the Tower, close to his Chamber, yesterday acquainted the House of Lords therewith and the reason, which was that His Lordship was so exceeding rude yt he could not tell how to deal with him.”

Of the famous duel fought in 1712 between Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton, in which both principals were killed, I shall speak later.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### AN ELOPEMENT, DEATH OF LADY MASTER

THE new century opened very sensationally for the Legh family 1700 with the elopement of Isabella Katherine, or Bella, as she was always called, seventh and youngest daughter of Richard and Elizabeth Legh. Born in 1680, after her father's death, which occurred in 1687 when she was seven years of age, all her childhood and early youth had been spent at Lyme under the care of Peter and Frances. She had always been a troublesome and wilful child, needing constant attention and supervision. After she grew up she went to reside with her mother in London, and was apparently a source of continual worry and anxiety to poor old Madam Legh. There is no portrait of her, and from her subsequent behaviour one can only form an unfavourable opinion of her character.

On August 21, 1700, being then aged nineteen, Bella left her mother's house in Devonshire Street, at nine o'clock at night, the latter being away from home, with a man named Green, who was described as being a "silver wire drawer." Subsequent inquiries, however, proved him to be of good family, the son of a Norfolk parson.

The girl was accompanied by a maid, who had been bribed by an offer of £500. The marriage seems to have taken place between the hours of 8 p.m. and 2 a.m., when Bella sent a letter to her mother with "her and her husband's duty (as she calls it)," and entreaties for forgiveness and a request that no blame may attach to the maid.

An account of this sensational affair was written to Peter at Lyme on August 22, 1700, by Thomas Fleetwood of Bank, who at this time was paying his court to Lettice Bankes, whom he afterwards married :

## LYME LETTERS

“ SIR,

“ These are to acquaint you with what your Mother commands me to doe, she being in so much trouble that she cannot write herself. Your sister Isabella yesternight about 8 o'clock went out with her maid, yr mother being from home, and sent a letter about 2 in the morning with her and her husband's duty (as she calls it), and desire her not to be angry with the maid, for she took her out with her. Yr Mother sent in great trouble to me early this morning, to whom I immediately went, and have made all imaginable search after them, but as yet in vain. Who she has married God knows. I am just going to Richmond to acquaint Mrs. Bankes and bring her to your Mother. The next post you shall know more.

“ Yr humble servant

“ THO: FLEETWOOD.”

Lettice Bankes writes a longer and more detailed account describing her mother as being terribly upset, and “frighted and hurried out of her life.” One can well imagine the horror and consternation of poor old Madam Legh.

“ My Mother's Concern is so great she cannot write herself, but orders me to let you kno' how far she has gone in this melancholy affair.”

With great promptitude Madam Legh secured the services of the Lord Chief Justice, who immediately instituted a search for the girl,

“ but could only find some of the crew who promised they would appeare before His Lordship, which he ordered them to do and sent for my Mother to come there to meet them.”

The runaways were summoned to appear before the Lord  
1700 Chief Justice,\* who held a special trial, and is described as being “civil beyond expectation.” Madam Legh was supported by most of her family and by many friends, amongst them Lord Gorges, Sir Thomas Mainwaring, Mr. Fleetwood, etc. :

“ We all went yesterday at 4 o'clock with Councill, my Lord Gorges and other friends. After being there an hour, they, the young man

\* *Sir John Holt* (1647–1710), born at Thame, Oxfordshire; descended from a Lancashire family of some importance; was counsel for Lord Russell in 1683; appointed Lord Chief Justice in 1689, and sworn of the Privy Council. He discontinued the brutal practice of bringing the prisoner into Court in irons, and was always scrupulously fair to the accused, in distinct contrast to his direct predecessors Scroggs and Jeffreys, who were both cruel and corrupt.



## AN ELOPEMENT

and his officials came with Council. My Lord Chief Justice very angrily asked for the young lady, the Council said she was near and should appear, if her friends would not take her away from her husband."

There was a sensational scene in court, the guilty pair falling on their knees before old Madam Legh and begging her blessing :

"This impudence surprised us," writes Lettice Bankes, "and we none of us spoke to her. My Mother asked how she came to leave her ; then her husband told her she was his wife and desired she might not ask her any further questions, and took her to their side of the room from us to his elder brother's wife who stuck like a Briar to her till his Lord Chief Justice came in."

The bride refused to say where she had become acquainted with her husband, in spite of searching cross-questioning from the Lord Chief Justice,

"who was very strict and severe, in his Examination, and made them discover the parson, who proved a drunken knave. He is committed to the Courts till Monday, from thence my Mother is to prosecute according to Law."

It was supposed that Belle had made the acquaintance of this fortune-hunter at the church of a non-juring divine, a certain Mr. Sellar.\*

"They are Mr. Sellar's congregation and there I believe they first saw her, and by this wicked maid got her out of the house ; we hear she has sold her for 500l."

A friend was deputed to go to Mr. Sellar to make some inquiries respecting the young man, but Mr. Sellar appeared, very naturally, to dislike the idea of being drawn into the affair, and disclaimed all knowledge of either the young man or the young lady and "stuck close to his reserve."

"He says," reports a mutual friend, "and I believe truly, that he never saw the young man who carried off the Lady in his life, that he knows of, nor doth he know or ever heard that he was at his Meeting, nor ye young Lady neither, but when she came with her Mother."

\* *Sellar*, probably Ebenezer (1646?–1705), non-juring divine; educated at Lincoln College, Oxford; Vicar of Charles at Plymouth; deprived in 1690; published religious works.

## LYME LETTERS

It seems to have been the universal opinion that the whole business was managed by Madam Legh's "Cook Maid," and, incredible though it sounds, the young couple were supposed never to have seen each other till the night before they were married.

It being established beyond all doubt that the marriage was valid, the advice given to Madam Legh was to make the best of a bad business and

"secure her portion for her and hers with all the speed we can before they cool, for now they are frightened. She writ to my sister Master to be her friend, to my Mother to forgive her and to send her clothes; this she granted being advised to it before. This is all the particulars of our tragedy, God grant it may prove as well as some say it will."

As a result of various inquiries made into the character of the bridegroom, who was still under age, it was ascertained that he was reported to be diligent, and that, while at school, when the other boys were at play, he spent his leisure time in learning French, which he spoke well. The marriage turned out better than was expected, and Isabella had one or two children, but she disappears from the scene and we hear little more of her. She became of feeble intellect and died in 1750.

The second marriage of Lettice Bankes with Thomas Fleetwood of Bank—to which we have alluded—must have taken place soon after her sister's elopement. Thomas Fleetwood was the eldest son of Sir Richard Fleetwood of Calwich, Staffordshire, and became "of Bank" in virtue of his first wife, who was the daughter and heiress of Christopher Banister of Bank, near Southport, Lancashire. He was an engineer of some note and built an important bridge, but his great work was the draining of Marton Mere, a large lake with an area of 3000 acres, into the neighbouring sea.

His marriage with Lettice turned out very happily, although the couple were much hampered by want of money. They were always in law suits and were continually applying for assistance to poor Peter, who had to supply the wherewithal to his impecunious relatives. These were not always as grateful as they might have been, the father Fleetwood especially, who was most





THOMAS FLEETWOOD OF BANK

*From a Painting by Michael Dahl in the possession of C. Onslow Master, Esq.*





## DEATH OF LADY MASTER

difficult and tiresome, and always threatening to make settlements “disagreeable to ye Lime family.”

“I wish my own Constitution would permit me to live upon Bread and Water and then I believe I should give Content either with life or (I hope) a happy death.”

Lettice writes to her brother on one occasion,

“when nearest relations are weary of one, ’tis no wonder if afflictions increase.”

Old Madam Legh, too, was constantly in difficulties and Peter was receiving perpetual applications for help to make her “easy.”

I cannot borro, and to run into debt to the Butchers and Bakers and Brewers is a disgraceful thing and will be talked of amongst those sort of people to my discredit. If I could make any shift without troubling you I would, for next to myself I would have you easy. I desire you will send me money to pay my debts and make me easy, who is

“Your affectinet Mother

“E. L.”

In 1712 Sir Streynsham Master became involved in further 1712 legal trouble. He appears to have petitioned against a decree or decretal order made by the Barons of the Court of Exchequer against him on behalf of a certain Mrs. Cook and John Ward, the eminent lawyer, who was also an intimate friend—as we have seen—of the Legh family, and who was much distressed at the circumstance.

The matter was brought up before the House of Lords, who gave judgment in favour of the defendants. To use John Ward’s own words :

“The Court of Exchequer has left Sir Streynsham to my mercy. I have waited some days for his proposals, but he sticks to nothing, and I fear I must leave him to Mrs. Cooke, who wants her money and will take him in Execution.

“May 12, 1712 : I have this day stood my trial in the House of Lords, and ye chief attack was upon my reputation, as drawing in Sir Streynsham Master, but I hope its ye firmer for this shake, for there was great appearance of Lords of all sorts and opinions and yet they unanimously agreed to affirm my Decree, Nemine Contradicente,

## LYME LETTERS

without ye least debate or hesitation, and wold have given costs but that I was a Lawyer and might have Law cheap. . . . I pitied your Mother and sister who were there, and I believe durst not say but as he would have them. I am very sorry," he adds, "for any misunderstanding and coolness this may have occasioned, but I'm sure if you knew half of ye malicious stories that have been raised, you would be satisfied there was noe sitting down with it without giving up one's reputation." \*

Lady Master, whose health as early as 1708 had been a great anxiety, was evidently consumptive. She had been paying a visit to Lyme in December of that year, accompanied by her daughter Anne and a French governess, "who aer all charmed with Lyme and your kind entertainment of them," Madam Legh writes to her daughter-in-law Frances.

"I thank God she is free at present from the pain in her stomach, but I find she was very much out of order."

Later on, symptoms of what must have been cancer, developed :

1714 "DEAREST BROTHER," Betty writes to Peter on June 25, 1714,

"This comes to thank you for your kindness to me and mine. We are ever so much obliged for it. I have been lately much afflicted with this pain in my Breast, I have not been fit for anything a long time. I was never better in my life all this winter and all this Spring till May come in, and then I come with my old paine in my stomach and from that then my paine in my Breast, and ye lump and paine come all at a time. Dr. Ratcliffe give me good hopes and ye famous surgeon Mr. Browne tells me not to fright myself, for it is dangerous to bring it."

She mentions some gossip, the second marriage of Lady Anglesey to John, Lord Ashburnham,† which took place in July 1714. Lady Anglesey, who was a daughter of William, ninth Earl of Derby, by his wife Lady Elizabeth Butler, had married in 1706 John Annesley, fourth Earl of Anglesey. Apparently her second marriage was not approved of by her family, who considered that she was throwing herself away. Why this should have been so, does not appear :

"Poor Lady Anglesey will throw herself away. I believe it is a greater trouble to her Mother than ye loss of Lady Betty Stanley.

\* John Ward to Peter Legh of Lyme.

† John, third Baron, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to Frederick Prince of Wales ; created Earl in 1730 ; died 1736.



## DEATH OF LADY MASTER

This was another of Lord Derby's daughters who died unmarried on May 1 of this same year, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

"Wise widows often Plays madd Tricks. I am sure she is a Match for a Prince. I don't know a better woman."

A course of waters at both Tunbridge Wells and Bath proved unavailing, and Betty died at Bath in October of this same year, 1714, at the age of forty-eight. They brought her poor body all the way up to Cheshire, and buried her on November 2 in the Legh chapel in Macclesfield church, her brother Peter, who had been at Bath with his beloved sister up to the end, paying all the funeral expenses. The entire cost of these was £119 11s. 2d., this included the sum of £39 14s., for mourning :

"Yours of the 19th last month came to me by which I find myself much obliged for ye great care you have taken both in ye management, and in ye discharging ye expences,"

writes Sir Streynsham to his brother-in-law from Red Lion Square on December 4, 1714.

Mrs. Fountaine had also visited her dying niece at Bath and writes to Peter on November 13 :

"DEAREST NEPHEW,

"I am extremely glad to hear you got over your sad and melancholy journey soe well, and I often wish I could be drinking a pot of coffy in your wife's chamber, and see the joy pretty Pugg [the monkey] is in that he is at liberty againe. I am sorry my nephew Master gives himself any trouble to requite so small a respect as I and Betty [her daughter] was able to pay my deere Neece Master."

Lady Master's loss was sincerely lamented by her family, who all adored her, Peter especially, to whom she had been the most devoted of sisters, and more of a companion to him than were any of the other members of his family. Her sweet and gentle nature and a most charming personality endeared her to all who knew her, and her untimely death cast a shadow and gloom over the house of Lyme for many months and saddened the Christmas of 1714.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THOMAS LEGH

WE must now speak of some of the male members of the Legh family. The most important, as being in the direct line of succession after Peter, was Thomas, second son and sixth child of Richard and Elizabeth Legh. He was born in 1675, his baptism being duly inscribed in the Disley parish register; but in less fulsome terms than usual:

“July 1, 1675, Thomas, sonne of Richard Legh Esqr of Lyme and Elizabeth his wife, baptized.”

The first mention of Thomas's name in the Legh letters occurs in August 1684, when Richard writes from Lyme to his wife, Elizabeth, then paying a visit to her father, Sir Thomas Chicheley. In this letter Richard describes with evident pride and satisfaction the prowess exhibited by little Tom at a stag-hunt at Lyme. The child, then only nine, appears to have organized the stag-hunt himself, assisted by the famous keeper, Joseph Watson, and Lord Derby and other notabilities were present on the occasion:

“Tom undertook,” writes the proud father, “(if I would give him leave) that nobody but himself and his councellor Jo: Keeper would goe & gather the Stags and bring them to the gates. My Lord thought it had been a brag, but when he saw Tom upon the little bay nag & a long pole of 3 yards in his fist & all the Stags walking at his command, he was very well pleased.” \*

We hear little more of Tom Legh until his marriage. He and his eldest brother Peter and his sisters all appear to have been educated at home, where a tutor, “a Bachelor of Arts, a very good Scholar and of great modesty and sobriety,” instructed them in the three R's, music, and rudimentary Latin, and

\* See “The House of Lyme,” p. 319.



## THOMAS LEGH

prepared the boys in some sort of fashion for the University. In 1693-4, Thomas Legh matriculated at Merton College, Oxford, at the age of seventeen, his name appearing in the "Alumni Oxoniensi" (1500-1714) as follows. "Leigh; Thomas arm: Merton Coll: matri 11 Feb. 1692-3." He is described as being "a pleasant ingenious man in company," but he does not appear to have made any particular mark during the time of his residence in the University, nor did he even take a degree.

On January 26, 1700-1, Thomas Legh, being aged twenty-<sup>1701</sup>six, married at St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden,\* by special licence, Henrietta, sole daughter and heiress, by his first wife, of Thomas Fleetwood of Bank, Lancashire, afterwards the second husband of Lettice Bankes,† who thus became step-mother-in-law to her own brother.

We have no portrait of Thomas Legh. He seems to have been an upright, honourable, well-intentioned man, of a rather weak character, very much in awe of both his mother and his wife, who was possessed of a violent temper and who ruled him with a rod of iron. He entered Parliament soon after his marriage, being returned for Newton borough in 1701, and having for his colleague his namesake Thomas Legh of Ridge. ‡

Lord Derby,§ as a great Lancashire magnate, offered his interest at the ensuing election. He writes to Peter Legh on November 15, 1701, expressing great surprise at hearing of the dissolution of Parliament :

"I verily believe you were surprised at the news." He proffers his services in Tom's interest with many protestations of friendship and affection : "Nothing will be wanting in me to serve two gentlemen I have that esteem for."

\* From the parish registers of St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden : "Jan : 26, 1700-1.

"Thomas Legh of Lime, Cheshire, & Henrietta Maria Fleetwood of St Andrew's Holborne, by Mr Tizzard with licence."

† See p. 216.

‡ *Legh of Ridge*, Thomas, belonged to a younger branch of the Leghs of Lyme. The arms—gules, a cross engrailed, argent, a mullet for difference. This Thomas Legh married Susanna (name unknown), and died in 1702-3, buried at Macclesfield.

§ *Derby*, William, ninth Earl (see p. 68).

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For this election three candidates appear to have been named: Thomas Legh of Lyme, Thomas Legh of Ridge, and John Howe, a somewhat formidable rival, who also stood for "Gloucester county," but was defeated.

Tom Legh was in no way distinguished, nor did he make his mark in any particular line, simply discharging his duties as a private member, and, despite all the bribery and corruption of the day, in a perfectly honourable and straightforward manner. He appears to have had a joint establishment with his mother for a time, sharing with her the house in Devonshire Street, Soho, where she received so many of the great people of the day and held a sort of *salon*. This arrangement, however, did not work at all, and with a rapidly increasing family and not too much money, Tom found great difficulties arise in the combined establishment, and continual complaints from both parties were written to poor Peter at Lyme, who had to keep the peace between his mother and brother.

John Ward of Capesthorpe was always trying to smoothe matters over between Tom and his mother, but his efforts were not fraught with much success. He describes a visit he paid to  
1706 the redoubtable old lady in May 1706:

"I have been to ye old Lady with the proposal you put to me, and had ye success I expected, she neither to be moved nor mollified."

An inveterate busybody, he had at this date just arranged a marriage between the Earl of Anglesey and Lady Henrietta Stanley,\* "ye first match I ever made and I hope will prove a happy one."

The bridegroom he describes as "ye considerablest man of his time, a man of great parts, honour and virtue."

Old Madam Legh was very exacting—not to say tiresome—and was also a considerable expense to poor Tom, who had besides a large and growing family to support:

\* *Lady Henrietta Stanley*, daughter of William, ninth Earl of Derby, by his wife Lady Elizabeth Butler; married, May 1706, John Annesley, fourth Earl of Anglesey; he died and she then married secondly, July 1714, Lord Ashburnham, and died in 1718 in the 31st year of her age.



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“I am now worse off than ever,” he complains to his long-suffering eldest brother, “for whilst she [his mother] was in the country, she allowed me 50*l.* p. an: and now that she has come to town, there is upon me herself and three servants and my sister, and all that she will allow me for keeping of them is 93*l.* a year, so that all her kindness to me is to oblige me to keep her and hers for 45*l.* per annum.”

The old lady was also very particular about her food :

“My mother is so very curious that she will have a very extraordinary good table or she roars without reason.”

Old Madam Legh, on her side, complains of the extravagance 1702-3 of Tom and his wife :

“They keep no accounts of anything, trust all to Sarvants, and their delight is in treating and company keeping. They live at a far greater expence than all my income would maintain, and therefore I beg you will not trouble yourself for them, for they allow themselves that which I cannot afford myself.”

She was always advocating their leaving London and settling in the country, and instancing her own case when Richard used to go up and down from Lyme to London, although with Tom’s small income this would have been impossible :

“He, I believe, would be glad if she would go in the country, but he is so henpeckt and she is of that spirit that he is the greatest slave to her in this world, but his father often stayed away and when he did come to the parliament he never stayed above a month . . . nor does she consider the good of her children’s healths, for they want the benefit of the country air, but it is neither husband nor Children that she values in comparison of her own humour. She has been so ungrateful to me and he too, that I will never concern myself for them. I wish they were both wiser, but I believe nothing but poverty and a prison will make them discreet, and for my part, I should not pity them, if they were in such distress, they have so much disoblged me.” \*

Old Madam Legh’s complaints of Tom are borne out and rather justified by Edward Finch,† the great composer, brother of the Rector of Winwick and an intimate friend of the Leghs, 1703

\* Madam Legh to her eldest son, Peter.

† *Finch, Edward* (1664-1738), composer, fifth son of the first Earl of Nottingham, brother of the Secretary of State.

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who writes to Peter in 1702-3 (then living in St. James's Place, a house he had probably taken for the season), criticising Tom's conduct and behaviour. He implies that Tom was both careless and indolent, and that the way in which he disposed of his "idle hours" was not conducive to the advance of his career :

"If Mr Thos. Legh of Lime be sensible of ye danger he incurs by his way of disposing of his idle hours, methinks it were easy for you to convince him that such courses are so farr from promoting, that they are really the only Methods a man can take to unqualifie a Man's selfe for any bussness or employment. The most useful part of the lives of those who do anything in this world are the hours they spend alone and if those are employed right by custom they will become the most pleasant as well as the most profitable to body and mind and estate."

In spite, however, of all her grumbling and complaints old Madam Legh loved her children dearly, and was always in a terrible state of mind whenever there was anything the matter with any of them :

"You cannot imagine what trouble the account of Tom's illness gives me," she writes to Peter on one occasion, "for I was in hopes he was better."

"My Mother continues to go on with all the violence in the world," poor Tom reports in a later letter, "pretending the reason to be that she doth believe my Wife will not goe into the Country, this is a thing so maliciously false in itself that nothing can be more, for y<sup>e</sup> first day shee can be able to attempt y<sup>e</sup> journey, both shee and I have resolved to do it."

Mentioning also that his mother had stopped all supplies, leaving him very seriously embarrassed for want of money. This made him anxious to obtain some lucrative post in order to supplement his income. He had heard of vacancies in both the Prize Office and at Court, and was endeavouring to obtain one of these posts, but had been told by some friends, "which God knows I have found to be very scarce," that in order to be successful he had best retire from parliamentary life, "for by that means it would be in the power of my Friends to procure me a place."

This advice was evidently not disinterested and was certainly wrong. He writes to his eldest brother, begging to be told



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what he had better do, and the integrity and uprightness of his character may be judged by the following letter :

“ . . . Now, Sir, as to my laying down or not standing any more, it is what lies wholly in your breast, for it was your kindness to choose me so oft as I have been. And whenever you think fit to lay me aside, that I shall be very well satisfied with. . . . And now, Sir, if I may speak my opinion, it is most earnestly to desire that I may be in one Parliament more, and for this reason. In the first place, all the world knows how I have given my vote ever since I came into the House, and for me to lay down in hopes of a place, what will they say to it? . . . What is it that we have been falling out about all this while but to keep knaves out of Parliament that would sell their country for their interest. Now, after we have so long blamed ye doing of this in others, for me to come and doe ye same thing either by my own vote or by anothers coming in to serve my interest, it is, I think, making myself ye worst of mankind, and bread so got would neither do me nor mine any good.”

On April 24, 1705, Tom Legh writes to his brother again : 1705

“ I received yours and give you many thanks for your kind advice but at this time, as the case stands with me, I’m sure it will be of the last ill-consequence to me if I desist and not renew my request to you for your assistance at Newton once more. . . . If ye new Parliament prove but a good one, as there is all the reason in the world to believe it will, then it is most certain ye tide must turn, & if soe, whoever is out of ye House is out of ye way to be provided for.”

Tom Legh was again returned for Newton borough in the Parliaments of 1705, 1708, and 1710, his colleague each time being John Ward of Capesthorpe. He was as uncompromising a Tory as were his mother and eldest brother : “ May the Whigs always meet with such disappointments,” writes old Madam Legh in an undated letter, referring to the appointment of some Tory bishop, “ but at present they rid [ride] triumphant.” Mrs. Fountaine,\* too, in one of her priceless letters, alludes to one of her relations, a boy at school whom she fears may run away, “ for he has so much of the loyal family in his blood that he cannot bear submission to a Whig.”

Although the country as a whole was Tory, it was only after the Revolution and through the Tory opposition to the war and the patriotic feeling it aroused that the House became Whig.

\* See p. 29.

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After the Peace of Ryswick a new Parliament met and a Tory majority, pledged to peace and a reduction of taxation and indifference to foreign affairs, was returned. The army was reduced to 10,000 men, and there was even an agitation for the disbanding of these.

A new Parliament met in 1702, still Tory in the main, but united in the face of the threatening danger, and 40,000 soldiers and as many sailors were voted for the coming struggle.

1702

The death of William III on March 8, 1702, was a great blow to the Alliance, but it was left to the Duke of Marlborough to save his country. Three days after the accession of Anne he was named Captain-General of the English forces at home and abroad, and was entrusted with the entire direction of the war. He proved himself as capable a negotiator and diplomat as he was unrivalled as a general, and for the next ten years he practically managed the whole war and directed the politics of the country.

The age of Anne is often called the Augustan age of literature. It saw the flourishing of Addison, Steele, Swift, Pope, Gay, Pride, Defoe, Vanburgh, Congreve, etc., and what one might call the awakening of letters. Bookbinding reached its highest perfection in this reign, as did the design and manufacture of silver plate and furniture. The mode of locomotion was also much improved. Public coaches were increased to 800 by 1710. They were to pay 5/- weekly and were to go  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile for 1/6, above 2 miles, 2/-. Sedan chairs, which first came into use in 1626, increased in vogue. Dress became even more costly and extravagant, ladies paying as much as £8 or £10 a yard for brocades, and the French influence causing the "beau" of Queen Anne's reign to become superfine and modelled on the exquisites of Louis XIV's Court.

Hard drinking, which had rather gone out of fashion towards the end of the seventeenth century, was very prevalent during the eighteenth, and had spread even to the women. The Duchesse Charlotte Elizabeth d'Orléans,\* in her very interesting

\* *Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria* (1652-1722), second wife of "Monsieur," Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, only brother of Louis XIV, whom she married in 1672; his first wife was Henrietta of England, sister of Charles II, supposed to have been poisoned (her husband an accessory) in 1670.



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but extraordinarily coarse and outspoken memoirs, mentions how the ladies of Louis XIV's Court used to drink, and how it became a sort of amusement with them to see how much they could imbibe without being appreciably the worse :

“ Madame la Duchesse de Bourbon \* peut boire beaucoup sans être ivre ; ses filles veulent l'imiter, mais elles ne sont pas maîtresses d'elles-mêmes comme Madame leur Mère, et elles se trouvent souvent ivres.”

Madame de Montespan had apparently a very strong head, being able to drink the most intoxicating “ rasades ” without any ill effects, exactly, as the Duchess d'Orléans remarks, as if she had been drinking so much water :

“ Madame de Montespan et sa fille aînée peuvent boire considérablement sans être ivres un seul instant. Je les ai vu un jour avaler des rasades du plus fort Rosoli de Turin, sans compter ce qu'elles avaient déjà bu ; je pensais qu'elles allaient tomber sous la table, mais c'était pour elles comme de boire de l'eau.”

Snuff taking,† practically unknown before the age of Anne, became the rage during this reign, and much superseded tobacco smoking. This, in spite of the King's dislike of the practice, had become very much the fashion in Charles II's time. Women, and even children, smoked tobacco, children taking their pipes to school with them. Steele professed to be very much shocked at the new practice in 1712. The earliest mode of taking snuff was with pipes of the size of quills out of small spring boxes. These pipes let out a very small quantity of snuff upon the back of the hand, and this was snuffed up the nostrils with the intention of producing the sensation of sneezing.

Queen Charlotte took snuff. Miss Fanny Burney describes, in the Second Volume of her “ Diary,” page 426, mixing some snuff for the Queen and carrying it into Her Majesty's dressing-room, where the Queen was reading aloud to her daughters. She did not stop, but motioned to Miss Burney to put the snuff-box on the table. Ladies took their snuff-boxes with them to church, and beguiled the tedium of the long sermons by frequent pinches

\* One of Louis XIV's illegitimate daughters.

† “ Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne,” by John Ashton.

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of snuff, while offering their boxes to the men and women who sat near them. It was also considered good manners, while contributing to the collection, to offer a pinch to the churchwarden who brought round the bag.

Snuff taking continued well into the middle of the nineteenth century. An old great-uncle of mine, who died in the 'eighties, but still adhered to the high "choker" and stock of the eighteenth century, carried his snuff-box as people now do their cigarette case. This was produced at meals immediately after cheese and before the dessert appeared, his first pinch of snuff giving the same enjoyment to the old man that a cigarette would do to the most inveterate smoker of the present day.

Of a dull and heavy temperament, weak and feeble in her submission to the violent temper and overbearing disposition of her friend the Duchess of Marlborough, Anne had, however, all the pride and stubbornness of her race, and a nobility of character that showed itself when she was brought to bay. Bred a Tory, she shrank from party government as an enslavement of the Crown, and she looked on the Whigs as disguised republicans. She was a great stickler for etiquette, dining in royal state, and holding firmly to the traditions of the monarchy of her ancestors. Nor would she brook the slightest departure from the organized routine of ceremonial, and anything approaching a want of proper respect was met with the snubbing it merited.\*

1712 From a London MS. newsletter of January 19, 1711-12, preserved at Lyme, we get the sharp rebuke administered by Her Majesty to two Aldermen who came to Court to know the Queen's pleasure, whether the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen and "several citizens of the best rank might treat Prince Eugène at dinner?" The answer they received being,

"That Her Majesty would return no answer to any Message which is not brought to her with the same respect as has always been paid by the City of London to her Predecessors, which is to bring the Message in writing, which these Aldermen did not do, but came only upon a Minute taken in ye Court of Aldermen of which they had no copy."

1707 In giving her royal assent in 1707 to the legislative Act of

\* Green.



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Union of England (as Great Britain) with Scotland—the chief event of her reign—Anne did so in the following noble words :

“ I desire and expect from my subjects of both Nations that from henceforth they act with all possible respect and kindness to one another, that so it may appear to all the world that they have hearts disposed to become one people.”

Tom Legh alludes to this event in a letter to his brother Peter, dated January 28, 1706–7 :

“ This day ye Queen Came in ye House and brought ye Union which she recommended to us, and I question not but 12 or 14 days will be the longest that we shall keep it.”

Anne was a great supporter of the Turf, even racing in her own name, and was a frequent attendant at Newmarket. In her youth, and until her great size prevented it, she was a keen rider to hounds. She set her face steadily against the Drama, and never attended any plays, nor had any theatrical performance given before her.

A MS. newsletter, written to Lyme from London on December 30, 1704, describes the rejoicings that took place after 1704 the battle of Blenheim, and speaks also of the very disgraceful and un-English behaviour of the mob at Northampton and Loughborough towards the French prisoners of war captured in the battle. These included Marshall Tallard \* himself, who was subjected to gross insults :

“ This day the Lord High Treasurer † was gazetted at Windsor Kt Companion of the Garter. Conveniences are making in Westminster Hall for placing their 128 Colours and 34 Standards that were taken at the battle of Hochstedt, and they are to be brought through the City on 12th Day, when the Duke of Marlborough goes to the great treatment at Goldsmith's Hall. I hear Ct Tallard and the rest of the French officers in their journey to Nottingham and Lichfield were treated with great rudeness by the mob, who broke into their Rooms and drew back the Marshall's curtains as he lay in bed &ct, and at

\* *Tallard*, Marshall, French general (1652–1728), was made prisoner by Marlborough at the battle of Blenheim and brought to England where he remained in captivity for seven years.

† *Godolphin*, Sidney, first Earl of (1645–1712), statesman ; Lord High Treasurer and Marlborough's confidential ally, 1702–10 ; he was attacked by Sacheverell, who urged his impeachment in 1709 ; he was dismissed by Anne with a pension in 1710.

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Loughborough, being on their Fair, he was forced himself to their view in a Balcony to pacify their rage and curiosity, which the officer who commanded the party of Horse that was appointed for their guard, declared otherwise he could not protect them from it."

Great rejoicings followed the victory of Blenheim and the passing by Marlborough of the French lines across the Dyle. Anne went in state to St. Paul's, and there was a General Thanksgiving, "Te Deums sung and a sermon preached on ye occasion."

But Marlborough was to have a bitter disappointment, for his plan of attack along the line of the Moselle was defeated by the refusal of the Imperial Army to join him, and when he transferred the war again to the Netherlands, the Dutch generals withdrew their troops and refused to join in the projected attack on the Duc de Villeroy \* in the field of Waterloo. A Legh MS. newsletter written from London to Lyme on August 21, 1705, says :

"Ye melancholy story is our disappointment in Brabant, where ye Duke of Marlborough on ye 18th had an opportunity to have fought ye enemy, and in all probability from ye goodness of his troops and ye superiority of ye numbers (as in his letter to ye States), to have Solicited them upon a glorious victory, Monsieur Overkirk was of ye same opinion, but ye 3 Field Deputies of ye States and some of ye general officers, thinking it impractable to force ye 4 posts by which we must have come at ye Enemy, and General Churchill † having not been able to march through ye forest of Soigne to attack them in flank at ye same time, ye Duke of Marlborough was forced to retire and repass ye Dyle, and now we are going to besiege Lewee in wch place is two Batt and to complete ye demolishing of ye Lines and so 'tis believed ye Campaign will end."

The Duke in a postscript to this letter to the States does not attempt to disguise the bitterness of his disappointment :

"My heart is so full yt I cannot forbear this occasion to represent to yr High and Mightinesses yt I find I have much less authority here then when I had the honour of Commanding yr Troops last year in Germany."

\* *Villeroy*, Duc de (1643-1730), was brought up with Louis XIV, who had a great affection for him; he was hopelessly incompetent as a general in the War of the Spanish Succession, losing the disastrous battle of Ramilies.

† *Churchill*, Charles (1656-1714), general, younger son of Sir Winston Churchill and brother of the great Duke of Marlborough; he fought at Landen in 1693 and at Blenheim in 1704.



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It gives one some idea of the slow progress of travelling by sea as well as by land in those days when we read that the Duke of Marlborough, sailing from Margate on a Wednesday, did not land at Flushing before the Friday following.

A MS. newsletter at Lyme of April 14, 1709, is interesting 1709 as speaking of the first building of Marlborough House :

“ His Grace the Duke of Marlborough has got a grant of the Spring Gardens near St. James’s adjoining to the Parke, where he designs this summer to begin the Building of a stately Palace of 16 rooms on a floor.”

In 1708–9 an invasion of England was feared, the idea being that the attack would proceed from Spain in favour of the Chevalier St. Georges. The fortifications of Edinburgh were strengthened, and £40,000 were to be expended on “ putting our garrison into a good condition of defence against any further attempts from ye Pretender.” Henry Arderne writes to his cousin Peter Legh on January 8, his very anti-Jacobite principles being gathered from his letter :

“ ’Tis feared the Pretender means another descent and the Forces are ordered Northward, but I fear the attempt will rather be on Ireland, but they talk a little of a Peace, so yt ’tis probable if we show ye Pretender Tyburn, ’twill be a fair step towards a durable Peace, but we hope this is nothing but Talk wch will vanish soon.”

In the year 1709, a storm of popular passion burst suddenly on the Whigs. This was occasioned by the impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell \* in consequence of a sermon which he preached at St. Paul’s in favour of the doctrine of non-resistance. This caused a great flood of enthusiasm to spread far and wide. The Tories made the most of this, and the popular divine became the hero of the hour. All the young ladies declared that they would be married by no one but him ; he was fêted and courted, and Mr. Lloyd—a Shropshire magnate—presented him with a living of £200 a year.

\* *Sacheverell*, Henry (1674?–1724), political preacher ; advocated High Church and the Tory cause, violently abused dissenters, low churchmen and Whigs. Preached a violent sermon at St. Paul’s in favour of the doctrine of non-resistance, in consequence of which he was impeached and committed to the custody of the Sergeant-at-arms. Was suspended from preaching for three years. This sentence was felt to be a triumph for him and the High Church and Tory party.

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“On Sunday last,” a MS. newsletter at Lyme states on December 3, 1709, “Dr Sacheverell preached at Lothbury Church, where was so great a crowd of people to hear him yt they were ready to throw down ye doors and windows of ye Church, which shows ye relish ye people have of sound divinity. I hear that not only Dr Moss \* but Dr Smallridge † excused themselves from preaching before my Lord Mayor at St Paul’s on ye late Thanksgiving Day, upon ye account of ye ill treatment Dr Sacheverell met with for his 5th of November sermon.”

The light sentence the Doctor received was an acquittal, and bonfires and illuminations proclaimed a Tory triumph.

1710 To return to poor Tom Legh and his troubles. In 1710 the Qualification Act was passed which ultimately dismissed him from the House. This Act was to prevent persons who were not possessed of property to the value of £600 a year from sitting in Parliament. Candidates had to take an oath stating that they *were* possessed of such property, the penalty for anyone refusing to swear being £100.

Poor Tom was evidently unable to produce evidence of the possession of a sufficient income to qualify him for the post, for although he is spoken of as standing for Newton in 1714–15, his name does not appear in the lists of members after the election of 1710. He may perhaps have comforted himself with the reflection given vent to by Sir Francis Leycester ‡ in a letter to Peter Legh bearing date, January 8, 1714–15, where, speaking of his own retirement from public life he says :

“In a little time I shall be of Sir William Warton’s mind, that one may hear more in 2 hours out of the House than in a whole session within doors.”

\* Moss, Robert (1666–1720), Dean of Ely; chaplain-in-ordinary to William III, Anne, and George I.

† Smalridge, George (1663–1719), Bishop of Bristol and Dean of Christchurch, Oxford; chaplain to Queen Anne, 1710; refused to sign the declaration against the Chevalier St. Georges and was dismissed from the Lord Almonership.

‡ Leycester of Tabley, Sir Francis (1673–1742), son of Sir Robert Leycester and grandson of Sir Peter Leycester, the great antiquarian; married Frances, daughter and heir of Joshua Wilson of Colton, Yorkshire, and widow of Byrom Thornhill of Fixby, Yorkshire; she died 1716. His only daughter Meriel, born 1705, married first, November 24, 1723, Fleetwood Legh of Bank, eldest son of Thomas Legh of Lyme by his wife Henrietta Fleetwood of Bank, Lancashire; Fleetwood Legh died January 1725, and Meriel married secondly, Sir John Byrne. Sir Francis Leycester of Tabley and Peter Legh of Lyme were lifelong friends.



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Peter, whose unselfish devotion to all his family was beyond praise, and who spared neither time nor trouble in seeking to advance their best interests, had as early as 1702-3 approached the great Lord Nottingham \* himself with a request for some post for his brother Tom. He had applied in the first instance to Edward Finch † for advice how to obtain access to the great man. Edward Finch tells him to "find him at his office either in a morning just before dinner, or about 7 or 8 o'clock at night." Peter evidently had his audience of the statesman, who writes as follows to his brother Edward, a copy of his letter being forwarded to Peter at Lyme. The letter, however, containing but empty promises :

" Whitehall, March 11th 1702-3.

" DEAR BR

" I have rec<sup>d</sup> yo<sup>rs</sup> of the 7th & tho' yo<sup>r</sup> concern for Mr Leigh is to freindship, yet 'tis very needless in reference to any service yt I can pay him, for I shall be glad of an Opportunity for it. Mr P. Legh came & spoke to me for his Br & I immediately Spoke for what he ask't; but I do not find that place will be filled, or if it be, I doubt there have been so many pretenders to it & One especially that I shall not succeed in this attempt for Mr Legh, but however, I have took this occasion to recommend him, & I hope he will some way or other reap the fruits of it. I shall not be wanting whenever I have any prospect of succeſſe, For I extremely wish to shew I am in earnest zealous for him.

" I am, Dr Br

" Your most aff<sup>te</sup> Br

" N."

Amongst other friends helping to get poor Tom Legh a 1710-11 competence was his cousin, George Cholmondeley, who writes to Peter on January 30, 1710-11, stating that he has been endeavouring to obtain an Irish Commissionership for Tom from Lord Rivers : ‡

\* *Nottingham*, Daniel Finch, second Earl of (1647-1730), statesman. First Lord of the Admiralty, 1681-4; after the flight of James proposed a regency, and opposed the motion declaring the Throne vacant; carried the Toleration Act, reluctantly dismissed by William III; again Secretary of State in 1702-4; active as the head of the High Church Tories; dismissed by George I for advocating leniency to the Jacobite peers.

† See note, p. 223.

‡ *Rivers*, possibly Richard Savage, fourth Earl (1660?-1712), general. M.P. for Wigan in 1681, intimate with Swift and with Harley's circle.

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"I went with my Cos Thomas to my Lord Rivers and spake for his Interest to make him an Irish Commissioner, and by his staying in the House yesterday upon the Division abt the Place-bill, I hope he hath a prospect of succeeding, for that is what we allowed to none of our Friends, but those who were to have places; the Court let that bill jogg quietly on till at the third reading we had a smart debate yesterday in which Sir Thomas Hanmer \* spoke for the bill like an Angel, and every word carried Conviction in it; the Whigs and the late M--ers were very uneasy, their scandalous proceedings in Parliament being all laid open as reasons why both Crown and Country ought to be afraid of such a Majority in the house; we carried our point, Yeas 235, No's 145, so the bill is passed, but I fear will be thrown out by the Lords."

Through the powerful influence of Speaker Bromley,† John Ward,‡ William Shippen § and others, Tom Legh had great hopes of obtaining the coveted post of one of the Commissioners for the duty on Hides, which was worth £500 a year. The Lord Treasurer Harley || was approached and "made the most friendly protestations imaginable," telling Speaker Bromley that Tom Legh "should have a place forthwith and to his satisfaction, and better than he or I had ever asked." This was the office of Commissioner of Excise, which carried with it a salary of £800 a year. The patent was to cost £70, "a sum more easily paid by an elder brother than a younger," as William Shippen observes in a letter to Peter Legh :

"DEAR SR," he writes from Essex House,

"My L<sup>d</sup> Treasurer is not yet returned from Wimple,¶ but I have

\* *Hanmer*, Sir Thomas, fourth baronet (1677-1746), Speaker; chief of the Hanoverian Tories; chairman of the committee which made the "representation" of 1712.

† *Bromley*, William, of Baginton, Warwickshire (1664-1734), Secretary of State; Knight for Warwickshire, 1689; refused allegiance to William III; M.P. for Oxford University, 1702-32; D.C.L. Speaker of the House of Commons, 1710; ancestor of Brigadier-General Sir William Bromley Davenport, K.C.B., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

‡ *John Ward* (see note, p. 195).

§ *Shippen*, William (1673-1743), parliamentary Jacobite; brother of Dr. Robert Shippen, Principal of Brasenose, Oxford.

|| *Harley*, Edward, first Earl of Oxford (1661-1724), statesman; created Baron Harley and Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, 1711; obtained the dismissal of Marlborough and the creation of twelve peers to carry the Peace of Utrecht in 1712; impeached in 1717 on charges of making the peace, secretly favouring the Chevalier St. Georges.

¶ He must have been visiting his son, afterwards second Earl of Oxford, who acquired the place through his marriage with Lady Margaret Cavendish Holles, only daughter and heiress of the Duke of Newcastle.



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received a letter from his Br who is with him there, desiring me to go to his cousin Tom Harley, who he said had rec<sup>d</sup> a Letter from the Treas<sup>r</sup> by ye same post wth directions to give me full satisfaction in yr Br<sup>s</sup> business. I accordingly went with yr Br to Tom's house, & there we talked matters over. I found at last yt the Treas<sup>r</sup> had directed him to offer us to make y<sup>r</sup> Br one of the Commissioners for the duties on Hides &ct (wch is 500l.). I told him I had in my own mind pitched upon the Excise, & I hoped my Ld would not refuse it him. You know the Excise is 800l., & I was willing to serve them up as high as I could. Tom hath promised to represent this to my Ld & gives us hopes of success. Now I wd ask yr advice, whether you would have us insist on the Excise, or, if we find any difficulty there, to accept of the Leather wch is at our service."

Tom Legh adds a P.S. to this letter :

"DEAR BR

"You find by ys [this] that I have excepted of a place but am forcs't to word it otherwise. T. L.

"I beg you wont mention this till we have fixt it, & what answer you return let it be sent as your Last."

Whether it was thought that his friends were being too <sup>1713</sup> grasping in wishing to secure for Tom Legh the post with the larger salary of £800 a year, instead of being content with that of £500 which was practically within his grasp, it is impossible to say. It is also possible that there was some intriguing on the part of Tom Harley, who seems to have had a good deal to do with the disposal of the patronage of his cousin the Lord Treasurer. A letter from John Ward to Peter bearing date May 14, 1713, seems to support the theory of intriguing going on somewhere :

"DEAR SR,

"I rec<sup>d</sup> last post a l<sup>re</sup> [letter] out of Lancashire that it had been asserted there in publick Company and spread among all ye Gentlemen of ye County,

That ye Reason yo<sup>r</sup> bro<sup>r</sup> Tom has got no p<sup>r</sup>ferment was yt I had obstructed it By telling a Great Man yt he had no occasion for it, his brother having estate enough to support him. Yt I only took care of myself & made use of my interest wth that Great Man to promote my own. Yt I told yt Great Man yt he needed not to be in any concern for having such members as he desired to have elected at Newton, since

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I would take care of that since I assured him I govern'd ye family of Lime.

"I shew'd the l<sup>re</sup> [letter] to yr brother who is very ready to doe me right & I transcribe this for you that you may do me ye like wch I doubt not you will.

"I guesse & believe you will from what corner this comes from whence I have sustain'd all ye malice that ye wit of man or woman could invent. I will not enter upon any justification to you, having acquainted you at other times what I have endeav<sup>rd</sup> for yr brother & how far I am from having or expecting any advantage to myself & being assured you will believe me what I really am

"Yor affect<sup>te</sup> faithfull Serv<sup>t</sup>

"J. WARD."

That Peter believed thoroughly in the honesty and integrity of his friend, his answer to the above letter will show :

"DEAR S<sup>R</sup>,

"I am surprised at yr letter yt gives me an account of a Lancashire story I kno' nothing of, nor from whence it comes, but suppose 'tis design'd to make mischief.

"I do remember when first you were made Ju: several of my acquaintance & yrs in Company with me, have wish'd yt you would serve yr Broth<sup>r</sup> Men (?) now you were in power yrself. My answer was—That I had good assurance you had us'd yr interest for my Bro<sup>r</sup> & would continue to do so as opportunity served. By yrs you may see I have all along Confided in you wch I take to be the best reason I can give for yr p<sup>rsent</sup> justification. Till I can hear more of this matter & from whence it comes—I am Yours P. L."

The fact, however, remains that, although the whole matter seemed to be settled, and that Tom Legh actually received the congratulations of all his friends on his appointment, the cup must have been snatched from his lips, for poor Tom's name does not appear amongst those of the Commissioners of either Hides or Excise.

1711-12 In the Parliament of 1711, with a view to putting a stop to the senseless custom, a bill was brought in to prevent duelling, but was dropped by the Commons after the second reading. The following year, 1712, there took place the celebrated duel between Lord Mohun \* and the Duke of Hamilton,† fought in

\* *Mohun*, Lord (see note, p. 211).

† *Hamilton*, James Douglas, fourth Duke (1658-1712), Ambassador to France



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the Ring in Hyde Park, where both principals were killed. Various accounts of this duel were given, as to whether the cause which provoked it arose from a love affair or from a political discussion. It was also alleged at the time to be a Whig plot, and was fought just before the Duke's departure to take up his duties as Ambassador to Louis XIV on the eve of the conclusion of the Peace of Utrecht. Lord Mohun had—it was alleged—given the Duke the lie and challenged him to mortal combat. Roger Kenyon, the lawyer, writes to Peter Legh at Lyme on November 15, 1712 :

“ An Adventure this morning has taken up all ye talk of ye day. Duke Hamilton and Lord Mohun quarrelled a few days ago about some love affairs, and this morning fought in ye Ring at Hide Park with General Macartney \* and Col Hamilton their seconds. Lord Mohun was left dead upon ye place and Duke Hamilton just lived to be carried home in his Coach and then dyed. Col Hamilton was wounded, but I don't hear that it is dangerous, Macartney is fled.”

A newsletter at Lyme of November 22 gives the result of the Coroner's inquest :

“ The Coroner's inquest last night brought in ye verdict upon ye Death of Duke Hamilton, that ye Lord Mohun, General Macartney and Col Hamilton, Coll: of the Scots Guards, are guilty of wilful murder. But I am told yt Col Hamilton last night surrendered himself and was examined by a Committee of the Councill and gave a Large acc<sup>t</sup> of the Duel, by wch it appears that he disarmed Macartney, threw away his sword, and run to the Duke, who was on his knees over the Body of my Ld Mohun on the Ground, and raised him up in his arms, and whilst he had them there, Macartney, who had regained his sword, came and gave the Duke the Mortall wound which he had in his Breast, & then walked off, but this is hard to Credit of a brave man and a soldier.”

Old Madam Legh, delighted to lay the blame on her hated Whigs, gives her version of the affair in a letter written on December 6 from London to Lyme :

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1683-85. Imprisoned in 1708 for complicity in the attempted invasion of Scotland by the French. Rewarded for his support of Sacheverell by the Lord-Lieutenancy of Lancashire in 1710. Was named Ambassador Extraordinary to France on the eve of the conclusion of the Peace of Utrecht; killed in a duel before starting by Mohun or his second, Macartney.

\* *Macartney*, George (1660?-1730), general; distinguished himself at Malplaquet, 1709. Dismissed from his appointment on Marlborough's fall.

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“ I have sent you this inclosed that gives the trewest account, but all people doo believe that Mohun was put upon it by the party [Whig] to dispatch poor Du Ham<sup>n</sup> for it is reported that this Macartney should say some tyme agoe that Du Ham: his Embassy would be stopt ; I am glad all is sesed for the Quene, when there comes out the case in print I will send it you ; I hear my Lord Orkney, the D. of Hamilton's brother profers 300. pound more to be added to the 800. which will make it 1100 P. to anybody that can take Macartney, and 2 dayes ago he made his escape through a common shoer [sewer] or he had bin caught as is believed.”

1712

Another account is sent by Peter's first cousin, Henry Ardern of Harden, who was also present at the trial, which lasted five hours. He gives long descriptions of the wounds, which were terribly severe, one in Mohun's groin in which the surgeon could lay his four fingers. Henry Ardern saw and handled the three swords, Macartney's he describes as being much bent and blood-stained some twelve inches from the point, the exact depth of the Duke's fatal wound. This seems to place the guilt without any doubt upon the general :

“ Could justice get hold of him wch, tho' she has leaden heels yet has iron hands, and will at last, I hope overtake him.”

Macartney he describes as being given “ a very extraordinary character as to Integrity, Honour, Bravery and affable Temper, not in ye least quarrelsome.” His appearance seems, however, to have been unprepossessing :

“ He's as black as a Coal, his visage not unlike ye poor Duke's, but more sanguine and roughe, about his Grace's age, with a grave & Composed Countenance, lesse a beauty if possible than, Dear Sr,

“ Your most humble servant

“ HENRY ARDERN.”

Macartney, who escaped to Holland, surrendered and was found guilty in 1716 as an accessory, but was immediately restored to his military rank and promoted to be Lieutenant-General.

A great reaction of loyalty followed on the close of Sacheverell's trial, and the dismissal by the Queen of her Whig ministry. A MS. newsletter from Plymouth, preserved at Lyme, gives an



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account of the celebration of the Queen's birthday and its attendant festivities :

“ From Plymouth.

“ We have an acc<sup>t</sup> of ye Extraordinarie observation of ye Queen's birthday occasioned by ye Loyal examples of ye Worshipful Mr Benjamin Berney ye Mayor and ye Aldermen his Brethren. The Day was Ushered in with Ringing of Bells & ye Night concluded wth Bonfires, illuminations & Prosperity to her Ministers & to ye Loyal House of Commons. We have an acc<sup>t</sup> much like this from Gloster & some other Places, & it looks as though there was a fresh spring of Loyalty in ye Kingdom after its long discountenances by crying up Revolution Principles.”

With the fall of Marlborough and his consequent withdrawal from England all opposition to the Peace was at an end, and the long war of the Spanish Succession terminated with the Peace of Utrecht. This secured the Protestant succession to the throne of Great Britain, and effected the separation of the French and Spanish crowns. France purchased peace on less costly terms than Spain, but she had to consent to the re-establishment of the Dutch barrier on a greater scale than before, and to pacify the English resentment against the French privateers by the dismantling of Dunkirk and the expulsion of the Chevalier de St. George from her soil :

“ *London, July 17, 1712.*

“ Upon ye good news come down to Exeter of H.M. being put into possession of Dunkirk, the B<sup>p</sup> sent the news to the Dean that the Bells of the Cathedral might be rung, but the Dean would not permit the same, notwithstanding that he was requested by all the Loyal p<sup>ties</sup>. However the other bells in the City rung & gt Demonstrations of Joy was shown upon the occasion, & to be revenged upon the Dean, the Sunday following, when he ascended the pulpil to preach, many of the best of the people went out the church.”

A newsletter of April 4, 1713, from John Ward to Peter 1713 Legh speaks of “ the happy news of a general peace putting an end to such an expensive war,” and mentions also that the Newton electors were much offended at not having at once been told of so auspicious an event.

## LYME LETTERS

Louis XIV, evidently anxious to conciliate Anne, sent—according to a newsletter at Lyme, bearing date November 15, 1712—some beautiful “elbow chairs” as a present to the Queen :

“They write from Paris . . . That ye King had ordered 2 Elbow Chairs to be made for a present to the Queen of Great Britain, ye one to be velvet embroidered with gold, & ye other of a very fine gold Stuff of a New Invention.”

1714 In 1714 a Land Tax was levied in Great Britain towards raising the supplies for defraying the necessary expenses. Both Tom Legh’s and his brother Peter’s names appear amongst those subscribing,

“towards raising the necessary supplies for defraying Your Majesty’s public expences. They all cheerfully and unanimously have given and granted the several and respective Rates and assessments hereafter mentioned.”

The sum of £1,020,588 16s. was to be raised in Great Britain, whereof £996,611 11½s. was to be contributed by England alone in one year, from March 14, 1714.\*

1717 Thomas Legh’s health must have broken down soon after this, and his death probably took place sometime in 1717 at the age of forty-two when his chequered career came to a close. No mention of the event appears, nor do we know the place of his burial. In the parish registers of St. Andrew’s, Holborn, there appears, under the date November, 9, 1717, the name of a Thomas Lee of Hatton Garden, but there is nothing to show if this was our Thomas Legh, whose later years remain shrouded in obscurity. By his wife Henrietta, who only survived him five years, Thomas Legh left ten children, the eldest of whom—a boy—Fleetwood, became heir to his uncle Peter. Henrietta Legh died in 1722. At her death old Madam Legh took the eldest girl, Elizabeth, to live with her in London, and Peter and Frances adopted the other orphans and took them to Lyme, where they looked after them, as they had done in the case of their own small brothers and sisters, with all the care and tenderness of a father and mother.

\* From “The Chronological Table of the titles of the Acts passed in the reign of Queen Anne.”



## CHAPTER XXIX

### RICHARD LEGH

THE only interest attaching to the life of Richard, third son and ninth child of Richard and Elizabeth Legh, is that it provides us with some informing details respecting the procedure adopted by the All Souls College authorities with regard to the admission of the Fellows.

Richard Legh was born in 1679,\* and would have been but eight years old at the time of his father's death in 1687. Old Madam Legh had, as we have seen, settled with her two elder daughters in London after her husband's death, leaving all the younger children at Lyme to the care of her eldest son Peter and his wife Frances. These probably found the responsibility of home-education in the case of their younger brothers to be too great, for, unlike his elder brothers Peter and Thomas, who were educated at home, Richard was sent to a School at Tattenhall, Cheshire, kept by a Mr. Newcombe, the Rector. Tattenhall was not very far distant from Lyme.

The youths of the Elizabethan age were sent to the University in some cases at the age of fourteen, but Richard was nineteen years of age when he was admitted to Trinity College, Cambridge. From the book of admissions we learn that he was a Pensioner in 1698, and matriculated the same year, but did not graduate. His tutor, a connection by marriage, Mr. James Bankes,† who was also the College librarian, writes on November 23, 1700, 1700 to Peter Legh at Lyme, apologising for some neglect on the part of his pupil :

\* From the Disley parish register : " April 10, 1679, Richard, sonne of Richard Legh Esq. of Lyme was baptized." He had as sponsors Sir Richard Brooke, Sir Robert Cotton, and Lady Chicheley.

† *James Bankes*, son of William Bankes of Winstanley, and a brother of Will Bankes, husband of Lettice. He was born in Lancashire; Pensioner, Trinity College, Cambridge, Sept. 10, 1698, B.A. 1682-3, M.A. 1686. Tutor, 1691-1700. College librarian, 1696-1706.

## LYME LETTERS

. . . “ I suppose ere this you have heard from Dicky, to whom (in observance of your order) I would not give a mouthful of venison until I saw him write. I assure you 'twas no fault of mine he has been so negligent in not writing to his friends. I am confident I never neglected to remind him of it. Your venison was very good and we heartily thank you and your good lady for it, and drank both your healths with our friends in a glass of ye best wine our Town affords.”

Although the ridiculously strict supervision of Elizabethan days had been somewhat relaxed, the undergraduates—even in the eighteenth century—were still kept very much under control. It will be noticed from the above letter that, albeit Richard had actually attained his majority, his tutor was writing about him exactly as if he had been a child.

Dick's relatives appear to have entertained the extraordinary idea of sending him to Oxford as well as Cambridge, the suggestion being that he should go to Oxford for one month in a term to study there with a certain Mr. Tissar, one of the tutors, returning to the tutelage of Mr. Bankes at Cambridge. This system was to continue until the time of Dick's going up to All Souls to qualify for a Fellowship. His being descended, through his mother who was a Chicheley, from the Founder of the College, Archbishop Chichele \* (*circa* the fourteenth century), was also supposed to militate in his favour.

His brother Tom, who, it was thought, might have some influence with the officials of All Souls in virtue of his former residence at Oxford, was to represent Dick to them as being “ a very honest, sociable, good-natured fellow, and one that will live very easie and quiet amongst them, and will not be factious and troublesome.” At the same time the authorities were to understand that he was not much of a scholar and that they must not “ stand too much upon his scholarship, but to choose him in for his good humour &ct as mentioned before.” They were also to remember the wording of their statutes, which required candidates only to be “ Bene nati, Bene vestiti and Mediocriter Docti.”

The All Souls authorities, however, do not seem to have

\* *Henry Chichele*, Founder of All Souls College, Oxford.



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viewed the idea in the same light, nor do they appear to have considered that the advantages they would derive from the admission of a good-humoured, quiet man would compensate for his being very raw and backward and entirely ignorant of the classics. Dick himself seems to have been fully aware of his own incompetence and shortcomings, and to have been proportionately modest and humble. He speaks with gratitude of the kindness and consideration shown "towards such a block as I."

A certain John Chicheley,\* a first cousin of Dick's and himself a Fellow of All Souls, writes a long letter to Peter Legh from a place called "Henny Hill," on October 29, 1700, protesting strongly against the idea, which emanated from old Madam Legh, of the youth's being entered for both universities; but Dick had already matriculated at Merton College, Oxford, on July 3 of this same year, 1700.

1700

"October 29, 1700 :

"... As to my Cousin Tom's bringing Dick into All Souls Coll: by his friends and acquaintance which he had when at Oxon, I am afraid that he will find himself disappointed, for in four or five years time in ye University, we have a new set of people, some die, some get preferment, and others marry and are forced to leave us; so that if my Cosen Tom comes with Dick three years hence, 'tis a great chance but he will miss a great many of his acquaintance, besides too, he will find that so long an absence may perhaps have partly worn out his acquaintance, grounded as he was, which (I believe) was only on the account of his being a pleasant ingenious man in company, so that they courted his acquaintance more for their own ends than his; but for him to represent his brother to the Fellows of his acquaintance to be nothing of a scholar, and to desire them to choose him Fellow for his being a good humoured quiet man, I am mightily afraid 'twill but make them despise and expose him the more, for let me tell you that many of Tom's acquaintance have no great affection for ye Founder's kinsmen, and when they have such an opportunity, I dont doubt but that they will make use of it to his disadvantage or any Founder's kinsman whatever."

He then proceeds to give full particulars of the manner in which the candidates were examined. This nerve-shattering

\* *John Chicheley*, younger son of Sir John and Lady Chicheley; equitis Christ Church; matriculated March 14, 1694-5, aged sixteen; Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. B.A. 1699; Bar.-at-Law, Middle Temple, 1701.

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process appears to have been carried out in the presence not only of all the College officials, but of the Fellows as well, who were at liberty to cross-question the unfortunate candidates as much as they pleased and even to take them up into their own rooms to examine them in private (thus enabling them to bully as much as they chose, should they desire to do so), "but this," John Chicheley adds, "is scarcely ever done."

"Ye Candidates that appear for the Fellowships come for three days to ye College, one day after another. The first day the Warden and Fellows give ye several Candidates a Theme or Sentence about which they are to write eighteen or twenty lines more or less, according as they find matter; this is to be done in Latin. They shutt the Candidates up in ye Chapel for an hour and at the hours end ye Deans come for their Themes; 'tis impossible for them to know their Theme before they are locked up in ye Chapel, for just as ye Candidates goe into ye Chapel, ye Warden and ye two Deans make choice of a Thesis out of about thirty; that ye two Deans carry to ye Warden, and when they are in ye Chapel locked up there every man by himself so that he will have no help. After they have given up their Themes to ye Deans at ye hour's end, the Deans give yem [them] questions in Physicks to dispute on in ye Chapel ye next day, where they come, and being in ye Chapel, all ye Fellows come and hear them; this disputation lasts for about two hours and a half to three hours. After this is over the Candidates goe home and come again ye next day, where they walk in ye Cloyster, and ye Warden, Subwarden, Deans and Fellows, being seated in ye Chapel, they call the Candidates in one by one, and there they give ye Candidates four or five Latin Authors, and as many Greek ones to each Candidate, being called in one by one, some Candidates have more and some have less, but every one of the Fellows has the liberty to examine any Candidate as he pleases, and 'tis all expected extempore and without hesitation; and besides all this the Candidates are obliged to attend in ye Cloyster half an hour before and half an hour after these examinations, every day during the three days, that if any Fellow has a mind he may take them out of the Cloyster into his Chamber, and there examine them in private, but this is scarcely ever done."

One can readily conceive that the unfortunate Dick, albeit his honesty, sociability and good humour, stood a very poor chance; in fact, by the end of this long letter, John Chicheley, apologizing for his plain "spaking," puts it quite clearly and



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emphatically that the All Souls officials were refusing point blank to have anything to do with so very raw and backward an individual.

“ And as to my Cosen Dick’s being qualified to appear at All Souls, I beg of you to pardon me if I spake freely and sincerely what are my thoughts, I must confess that I find that so raw a scholar as he is at present, I think it is impossible for him to appear but with great discredit at All Souls, for ’tis impossible for him to make himself so much master of ye Greek and Latin tongues in so short a time as to be ready enough with them to render them into Latin and English extempore, anything that shall be put into his hands, which he must be able to doe if he designs to appear with creditt, and I am sure he had better never to appear at all unless he doe so. Thus far I must inform you farther. When I was at Oxon this last summer, I went on purpose to visit Tissar, and then he told me that he found Mr Legh’s friends had a notion that Mr Legh had very much improved under Mr Bankes, and he withall at the same time found Dick to be so very raw and backward, that he told me he would not take him for his pupil ; ye reason he gave was this, that seeing Mr Legh’s relations had such a notion that he had improved under Mr Bankes, and he finding that he was wholly ignorant in Classic learning, said that it wold be impossible for him to make him fitt to show for a Fellowship, ‘ and then,’ says he, ‘ Mr Legh’s relations will think that he has lost what he got with Mr Bankes with me, and that I have spoiled him,’ so that, upon consideration, he said he would not accept of Dick for his pupil upon any account whatever, and that he did really design to let my Aunt [old Madam Legh] know the truth of ye business to the bottom. I met him a while after in town, but whether he told this to my Aunt, I know not, but he told me he was then going to her and that he came to town on purpose to disclose this business to her.”

There was probably not much anxiety on the part of Tissar or anyone else to approach the ferocious old lady with the unpalatable news of her son’s unfitness for an All Souls Fellowship, and it seems very doubtful whether Mr. Tissar ever carried out his proposal of visiting her for this purpose. Having matriculated at Merton College in July 1700, Dick was apparently going backwards and forwards between Oxford and Cambridge that same year.

On November 23, 1700, James Bankes mentions the fact that 1700 “ an ugly distemper ” was raging in the town and that for this

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reason old Madam Legh had "put a stop" to Dick's return to Oxford for a time, he himself, apparently, having no say in the matter at all. James Bankes evidently did not share John Chicheley's views with regard to the young man, and hints broadly that Chicheley must have had some ulterior motive in representing Dick as being so clownish a personage :

"I discoursed Dicky," Bankes writes to Peter Legh, "and find his inclinations are fully set upon a College life, nor can I conceive the difficulty Mr Chicheley and Tissar makes of his getting into yt Society when he has three years to qualify himself for't. 'Tis true, their Statutes are very severe and strict as to that part of ye Examination before they are to be admitted into it, but I question whether they keep to ye letter. I'm confident if they did, they would find it a difficult task to fill up their society, and I doubt not but there are some in it now who were as much unqualified (if they go to ye letter of ye Statute) as Dicky may be three years hence, and I question not 'tis in yt Society as 'tis in others, yt ye rigour of ye Statutes are very often mitigated and dispenced with, especially when so near a Relation" [this was rather stretching a point] "to ye Founders is concerned, and I know no other reason than that he may ye easier bring in his Brothers, but not a word of yt to Mr Chicheley. 'Tis not only my own but ye sentiment of some others."

There is no mention of Richard Legh amongst the All Souls Fellows, so we must conclude that the progress of his education was not rapid enough to warrant his obtaining the coveted distinction. From a letter of his to his brother Peter, dated February 26, 1701-2, he was evidently anxious to leave Cambridge and go into the army. His writing and spelling certainly bear out John Chicheley's statements as to his being "no scholar," and from his spelling, much of which is phonetic, one gathers that he must have had a strong dialect. He speaks of suffering from a "voylant" (violent) cold, and of taking "advoise" (advice); of not "cearing" (caring) to remain longer at the University, "and rather than idle my time away, I would ventur an uncertainte in ye world."

"DEAR BROTHER,

"I received your kind letter last night, which I return you many thanks for, and am glad you are so well satisfied. I have been with Mr Kenyon and have told him my intentions, and he gives me this



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advoise, since I dont take my degree, for to get from Cambridge as soon as possible before the Sitting, for it will not look well for me to be in College att yt time, being I do not sit for a Degree. It is a 3 weeks this day to ye Sitting, so if you will be so kind as to let me know what yr intentions are, or what way you would have me to take, I shall be ready to observe you. I do not cear how soon I get from Camb: for that time is but lost. As you say, it will be a little difficult to get into a Standing Regiment."

On March 1, 1702-3, Richard Legh was gazetted a cornet 1702-3 in the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards, of which regiment Aubrey Earl of Oxford \* was colonel. In October of this same year Dick writes to his eldest brother, speaking of joining his troop at Petersfield, and mentioning the fact of his having bought a horse from Lord Stanhope,† a very "fine horse and I am in great hopes will do very well; I have shown him to several of our officers who are all in love with him."

On March 6, 1706-7, he writes to his brother again from 1706-7 Hertford, his headquarters, mentioning the fact of his attending Queen Anne to Newmarket :

"The Queen goes for Newmarket ye week after Easter, where I am ordered to wait her time."

We find him at Newcastle by the 22nd, which place he describes as "ye disagreeablest place in ye world, besides ye unhealthfulness of it." All his brother officers were very ill : "My Captain gone to London very ill; my poor Lt lies a dying, past all hope of recovery & 3 more officers in Town in ye same condition." His servant James he thought "wold have left his bones here." By a few days, however, he hoped to be at Lichfield, and then to see Cheshire again and Lyme, "which is the only place that I love in ye world."

\* *Oxford*, Aubrey de Vere, twentieth Earl (1626-1703), officer in the Dutch service till 1648; his estates sequestrated by Parliament in 1651; was an envoy to recall Charles II, and at H.M. coronation bore the sword of State as he did at that of the three succeeding sovereigns. In 1661 he received the colonelcy of a regiment called after him the Oxford Blues, which after his death became the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards Blue.

† *Stanhope*, James, first Earl (1673-1721), volunteer in Flanders, 1694-5? received a commission in the 1st Foot Guards; colonel in 1702; served under Marlborough in 1703, and gave valuable assistance to Peterborough at Barcelona in 1705.

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1709 On December 20, 1709, Richard Legh was gazetted lieutenant to Captain Charles Eaton, and he probably obtained his captaincy soon after. He sold his commission for £800, and was out of the regular army by 1715, but he got mixed up in some way or other  
1715 with the rebellion of 1715, and was reported to have been captured at Preston. This rumour, however, proved to be un-  
1721 founded. He was suffering from more illness in 1721; his niece, Elizabeth Legh, writes to Peter, hoping her Uncle Richard "with following Dr. Devishon's directions will git the better of his distemper, for a Dropsey taken in time may be easily cured." She reports that her grandmother, old Madam Legh (who was always greatly disturbed when any of her children were ill), "is very uneasy and frightened about it, and last week was very much out of order, with shortness of Breath, but thank God she is much better."

We have no further details, and Richard disappears from the scene after this date. There is no portrait of him, and he remains for us a stolid and prosaic individual of bucolic type, possessing neither interest nor charm. He married, about 1708, Elizabeth, sister of Will Bankes of Winstanley, the first husband of Lettice Legh, but of her we can learn nothing. She had one son, Peter, who died in 1735. Richard Legh died in January 1740-1, at the age of fifty-two, and is buried at Disley.



## CHAPTER XXX

### CALVELEY LEGH

THE only member of the Legh family who at all distinguished himself at the University was Calveley. Born on August 28, 1682, he was the fourth son and eleventh child of Richard and Elizabeth Legh. The first mention of Calveley occurs in a letter from Richard to his wife written about 1684, in which he speaks of the child, then aged about two, as being unusually intelligent and precocious for his years: "chattles most mightily and every day gets new words. Yesterday I took a deal of paines to hang up the two Pictures and my Gentleman had found them out speedily." \*

Poor little child! His father's death occurring when he was but five years old, and his mother's apparent neglect of all her younger children, her agonised grief having for the time being deadened all her other feelings, he and his elder brother Richard and the baby Francis began life with a heavy handicap. Peter and Frances no doubt did their best for the poor children, but they were young and quite inexperienced—both being under age—so that the responsibility which they undertook so readily and willingly was a far heavier one than they had any conception of. The three younger boys therefore started life under a great disadvantage, and it is scarcely surprising that—in Calveley's case especially—despite his undoubted capacity, he did not succeed in making a name for himself, as his career at the University was a distinguished one.

He appears to have been sent to a preparatory school at Warrington, where he remained until he went up to Oxford. The Warrington school seems to have been conducted in a very strange fashion, the scholars being apparently completely

\* Richard Legh of Lyme to his wife Elizabeth, page 320 of "The House of Lyme."

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neglected and allowed to behave exactly as they pleased. We are told that while there Calveley was

“spoilt as to his Books; he got there an habituel neglect at all Festivals and all other publick times of running Truant fro’ house to house for 5 or 6 weeks together without contradiction.”\*

Why was this state of things allowed to continue? And why, if it was known, were the school authorities not remonstrated with? Frank Cholmondeley apparently was well aware of what was going on, and was proportionately concerned about his godson:

“I spoke of it often, but could not in ye least prevent it, which makes it ye less to be wondered at what he does now.”

This extraordinary neglect and want of the most ordinary control and supervision of those committed to their charge on the part of the school authorities was scarcely a good preparation for the University, and one is therefore not surprised to find that the boy did not turn out very satisfactory.

1702

On March 28, 1702, Calveley matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford, at the age of sixteen, and was placed under the guardianship of Robert Shippen, a Fellow of the College, afterwards Principal, and who became the fourth husband of Calveley’s sister, Fanny Lady Clerke. One can see from the College register that—despite his delinquencies and faults of omission and commission, the contracting of many debts, and the fact of his being wild and unmanageable—Calveley obtained quite unusual distinction at the University. I quote from the Brasenose Register:

“1702. *Legh*, Calveley or Calverley, of Cheshire, Com: Matri: arm: 28 March, 1702, aged 16. c. 22. Feb: 1702–3. rem: † 24 Nov: 1704. B.A. All Souls 24 Jan: 1705–6. M.A. 27 Oct: 1710. B. Med: 12, Nov: 1716. D. Med: 22. Oct: 1720. Admon (as D.C.L. at Oxford), 20. May, 1727.”

It is difficult to arrive at the exact amount of the allowance granted to Calveley. He appears to have been given £80 a

\* Letter from Francis Cholmondeley of Vale Royal to Peter Legh at Lyme.

† Removed his name from the College books on entering All Souls, no doubt.





DR. CALVELEY LEGH, M.D.

*From an original Portrait by Zeeman (or Seeman) in the possession of  
C. Onsloze Master, Esq.*





## CALVELEY LEGH

year (amounting to about £400 per annum at the present day, pre-war rate), and this should have been enough had he chosen to live carefully. But from the letters and accounts we gather that he must have spent at least three times this amount. The arrangements all seem to have been very vague, and his tutor by no means strict or conscientious. As in Elizabethan days, the undergraduates had no money in their own hands, their allowance being paid to the tutor, who doled out money to his pupil from time to time. Mr. Shippen, Calveley's tutor, of whose honesty and integrity one cannot feel very sure, apparently kept no accounts, and seems to have had no notion whatever of the amount of the yearly sum his pupil was to receive. Frank Cholmondeley, who seems to have gone into the matter in a sort of way, reports to Peter Legh :

“ You should have had a quarterly account from him [the tutor] by which you might have discovered any extravagancies.”

Extravagant Calveley undoubtedly was, continually in debt, and having got into bad ways at Warrington school, he was not likely to reform when he got to the University. We hear much of his “ infrugality ” and, I fear, a certain amount of intemperance. Beset by temptations on every side, with not even the advantage of a good and judicious tutor, it is not surprising that the youth should have turned out—as described by Hearne \* in his “ Diary ”—as “ very troublesome to the College ” :

“ He must be kept with greater strictness and not allowed to gad up and down in his own unsteady mocons [motions] otherwise he'll be running into the country with some select companions of his own . . . learning is not to be got by loss of time.” †

Oddly enough some of his family seem to have raised objections to Calveley's very laudable desire to become a Fellow of All Souls :

“ I was sorry to find him press so much for a gown,” his 1704 brother Tom writes to Peter in 1704,

\* *Hearne*, Thomas (1678–1735), historical antiquary; second Keeper of the Bodleian Library in 1712; deprived as a Non-Juror in 1716; his diaries and correspondence were printed by the Oxford Society; he was the “ Wormius ” of Pope's “ Dunciad.”

† Frank Cholmondeley of Vale Royal to Peter Legh.

## LYME LETTERS

“ that can do him no service, but on ye other hand it will doe him all ye diskindness yt may be wch I tooke ye liberty to let him know, and withal, desired him not to do it without y<sup>r</sup> and my Mother’s consent. I believe I did not plase [please] him, soe have not heard from him since.”

One cannot understand what reason Tom Legh can have had for attempting to prevent his brother from trying for the All Souls Fellowship, unless it were from petty jealousy, his own University career having been so undistinguished a one. Calveley very properly resented this interference, and showed it by ignoring his brother’s letter.

He had some idea of taking Orders, which would have given great pleasure to his mother :

“ Your brother Calveley came to town with Mr. Hale in his Sha and staid but 3 dayes and went downe with him agane, but his chief business to town was to imploy Parson Sheepen \* [Shippen] to acquaint me that he deed [did] intend to goe into Orders as soon as was Convenient, and he desired you might be acquainted with it. I confess it was joyfull news to me.” †

Calveley evidently failed several times before obtaining the Fellowship. From the College Register we find that he entered All Souls on November 24, 1704, but a letter from his tutor, Mr. Shippen, bearing date November 10 of this same year, speaks of “ Mr. Calveley again disappointed at All Souls,” and laying the blame for this failure on the Warden :

“ I hope it may be better for ye young man than if he had succeeded, but ye Warden is chiefly to be blamed.”

This was Dr. Bernard Gardiner, ‡ who had been appointed Warden not long before Calveley’s admission as a Fellow in 1704. He had no doubt heard stories of Calveley’s delinquencies and shortcomings, and as he—Gardiner—was a keen anti-Jacobite, and Calveley’s sympathies were all the other way, added to the

\* *Shippen*, probably the Rev. William Shippen, Rector of Stockport, father of William Shippen, M.P., and also of Dr. Robert Shippen, Principal of Brasenose. He was a great friend of the Legh family.

† Madam Legh to her son Peter at Lyme.

‡ *Gardiner*, Dr. Bernard (1668–1726), Fellow of All Souls, 1689; Warden, 1702–20; Vice-Chancellor, 1712–15; checked Jacobitism and suppressed the “*terrae filius*” (elected undergraduate).



## CALVELEY LEGH

reports of his intractability and intemperance, it is probable that the admission of such a stormy petrel, into the sanctity of All Souls did not much commend itself to the new Warden.

Even before entering the College Calveley was often in money difficulties, but from the fact of his tutor, Mr. Shippen, continually demanding large sums of money, which were never properly accounted for, one gets rather suspicious of the integrity of the man. This is borne out by the opinion formed of his character by Mr. Reginald W. Jeffery, Fellow of Brasenose, who has collected a considerable quantity of material for a "Life" of the learned doctor. Mr. Jeffery's reading of the man is that he was a thorough rogue. His applications for money were incessant, nor did he scruple to make his demands through the medium of his unfortunate pupil—always himself in low water :

"Mr. Shippen having a great occasion for money, desired I would give him a Bill for forty pound upon you which accordingly I did,"

Calveley writes to his eldest brother on one occasion, and again, in an undated letter, he begs for himself :

"I am sorry you should forbid T. Shrigley paying me any more money wch makes me conclude you think fourscore pounds a year too extravagant an allowance for me to have, but wch, if you appeal to anyone that knows what it is to be of ye Univer: you will find it as little as I can possibly live on. Quarter Day is within 3 weeks otherwise I would not pretend to do it [obtain the money through this same Shrigley] without your special order."

Another letter begs for twenty pounds "by the 22 of this instant for my money is very low, and longer than that time I shall not be able to subsist." As a peace-offering he tells his brother of "a pretty book called 'The Devil and Dr. Tindall,' " \* which he would send for his brother's acceptance "if you can put me in the way to do it."

The following half-yearly bill was sent to Peter by the rapacious Shippen. Although this was no doubt only one of

\* *Tindale*, William, M.A. Magdalen Hall, Oxford, 1515 (died 1536). Translator of the Bible.

## LYME LETTERS

very many, the items, on the face of it, do not seem to have been excessive :

|         |                         |       |     |     |
|---------|-------------------------|-------|-----|-----|
| “ Imp : | Due to me last Account  | 0:    | 03: | 00. |
|         | Gloves in Oxon          | 0:    | 12: | 06. |
|         | Oxon Writing Master     | 1:    | 00: | 00. |
|         | Servants at Xmas        | 0:    | 07: | 06: |
|         | Mr Wood’s Bill          | 21:   | 13: | 06: |
|         | Stockings—2 pair        | 0:    | 05: | 02: |
|         | Mercer’s Bill           | 6:    | 19: | 00: |
|         | Leather breeches—I pair | 0:    | 05: | 06: |
|         |                         | <hr/> |     |     |
|         | Tot:                    | 31.   | 6.  | 2.” |
|         |                         | <hr/> |     |     |

Calveley seems to have suspected that his tutor was not quite in the good graces of his elder brother, but he always loyally attempted to excuse him :

“ I have lately understood ye reason why Mr. Smith and Mr. Cholmondeley entertains so unjust opinion of my Tutor, but all particulars I omit [until ?] a better opportunity.”

1705 By 1705 Peter had evidently been compelled to go more thoroughly into the accounts, and to attempt to put some limit to the expenditure which was becoming very excessive. The following short memorandum is amongst the Legh papers, drawn up, evidently, by the agent or steward :

“ Memo: That October ye 19th My Master and Mr. Calveley Legh settled accounts, and it doth appeare by perticulars that he has Received more than was due of his Annuity to Michaelmas, 1705. The sume of 291l. 04s. 09d.”

The letters of about this period, 1705 to 1711, have, some of them, charming old seals in red wax with different devices and mottoes. Though many of the seals are broken or defaced, I have been able with the help of a strong magnifying glass to decipher the mottoes and make out some of the devices. These are not armorial and many have been rings or classical gems used as seals. Most of them represent Cupid occupied in different ways : A seal on a letter of 1705–6 has Cupid manipulating the ropes of a ship in full sail, the motto, which is set round, being

“ Si ie la perd ie svis perdu.”



## CALVELEY LEIGH

A very curious example on one of Calveley's letters, the date, 1709, has two Cupids holding hands, one Cupid issuing from a large heart, which is set up between them, point downwards, the motto, which is set round in a circle as in the other seals, being

"Il n'y a place qve povr moy."

There are two examples of this seal, one, which may have been a ring, and another rather larger in which the figures are set the opposite way. An undated letter from Richard to his brother Peter has for seal Cupid attacking with a hammer a building entirely composed of hearts, the motto set round being

"Pev a Pev."

The seal on another letter of 1711 has Cupid being led by a dog, 1711 the motto

"La fidelité me guide."

Two other examples on letters of 1710 and 1711, respectively, have, the one, Cupid holding a heart, with the motto

"Certor vimprat,"

the other, which has no motto, the Saviour's head crowned with thorns, a halo behind.

Two other seals on letters of December 2, 1726, and March 29, 1727, respectively, have, one, Cupid, standing before a sort of altar on which there is a fire, which he is blowing up with a pair of bellows, and the motto

"Alvme le fev,"

the other, Cupid standing before an altar on which rests a heart, the sun's rays beating down fiercely upon it; no motto. Both seals are in red wax.

Calveley must have turned out rather a thorn in the side of Dr. Gardiner, the Warden, for, if Hearne is to be believed, he asserts in his "Diary" \* that

"Calveley, commonly called 'Stag Leigh' . . . was very troublesome in the College, he taking delight to foment Differences, and yet in this he was right, that he strenuously opposed the imperious tyrannical proceedings of Dr. Gardiner."

\* Hearne's "Diary," Vol. IX (1914), p. 302.

## LYME LETTERS

1720     The idea of the young man's taking Holy Orders was soon abandoned, and he adopted the study of medicine, passing his degree of Bachelor of Medicine in November 1716, and Doctor of Medicine in October 1720, settling at Bath, where he seems to have practised for some years.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### DR. ROBERT SHIPPEN

WE must now go back a few years. Although we have no documentary evidence of the fact, Fanny Lady Clerke is supposed to have married a third husband, one Oldfield, somewhere about the year 1700. Her matrimonial ventures were singularly unfortunate, for Oldfield died in 1708, and two years later Fanny married for the fourth and last time, on January 11, 1710-11, her brother Calveley's former tutor, Robert Shippen, now risen to be Principal of Brasenose, and a most distinguished man. In honour of his marriage the Fellows allowed him to extend the Principal's house southwards by annexing the rooms which lay between it and the new library.

This marriage appears to have caused a rupture between her 1710-11 and her sister Peg, who considered that she was being badly used and left to "shift for myself." She was thus paid out for her bad behaviour to her mother and Lady Master. She seems to have resented the fact of her sister Fanny marrying at all, taking it as a personal insult to herself, and writes in great indignation to her brother Peter, begging him to "mortify" the bridegroom for what she terms his "insolence." But she may also have been aware of the true character of the man, and very properly disliked the idea of his becoming a member of her family. From the Brasenose Quartercentenary Monographs it appears that the marriage took place as stated above on January 11, 1710-11, but from Peg's letter, dated the 26th of the previous October, it looks as if the wedding were already an accomplished fact :

"October 26, 1710.

"DEAR PETER,

"I engaged myself to let you know that my sister has thought fit to marry a Person that articted with her to treat me ill, and accordingly she has gone with him to Oxon and left me to shift for myself. I

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trouble you with this, because I think it is in nobody's power but yours to mortifie him for this insolence. I hope you will think it worth some resentment ; if you knew half ye particulars you would be very well assured I have been injured by an illnatured sister. I am, with all respect,

“ Your most affectionate sister  
“ M. L.”

Robert Shippen was a remarkable man, and came of a notable family, one of three brothers who all greatly distinguished themselves. He was the third son of the Rev. William Shippen, Rector of Stockport and friend of Richard Legh, and was born in 1675. He was sent to Oxford and took his B.A. degree (Merton College) in 1696, and M.A. in 1699, which year he also became a Fellow of Brasenose. He was elected Principal in 1710 by one vote over Dr. Smith, a former Fellow and Principal of Hart Hill. He was also Vice-Chancellor of Oxford from 1718 to 1722.

The elder brother William, who matriculated in 1687, entered afterwards into politics and achieved great distinction in the House of Commons, and became famous as “downright Shippen” the leader of the handful of Tories who opposed Walpole. Walpole himself declared him to be the only incorruptible man he knew. He was the friend of Pope, who said of him :

“ I love to pour out all myself as plain  
As downright Shippen, or as old Montaigne.”

Probably through the jealousy of his unsuccessful opponent, it was asserted that Robert Shippen owed his election to his youth, to his superior worldliness and to the expectation of the Fellows that they would “live easy under him, without the prosecution of studies according to the modern custom.” This was so far correct that, although he had the “Utmost Regard for its Interests,” it must be allowed that during his rule, and for years after, discipline was never rigidly exacted.\*

Through the Legh influence Robert Shippen was able to

\* Brasenose Quartercentenary Monographs. “The College under the later Stuarts,” by Richard Lodge, M.A., Professor of History in the University of Edinburgh, late Fellow of the College.



## DR. ROBERT SHIPPEN

secure for his brother William the safe seat of Newton, Lancashire, which he held for five successive Parliaments.

It is to be hoped that Fanny never became aware of her fourth husband's double dealing. Although there cannot have been any of the romance attaching to her first marriage with Robert Tatton—the husband of her youth—Robert Shippen made her a good husband, and she was probably as happy with him as she had been with either Sir Gilbert Clerke or Oldfield. She seems to have retained the name of her second husband, and is spoken of up to her death as Lady Clerke. We hear very little more of her, and her death, which occurred during a visit to Bath, took place in September 1728.

Dr. Shippen, who had always been on the best of terms with his brother-in-law (which makes it appear as if he had succeeded in completely disguising his true character), continued to correspond with him for many years after Fanny's death. The letters that passed between Brasenose and Lyme were chiefly relating to Peter's nephew, Fleetwood Legh (eldest son of his brother Tom), who was under Dr. Shippen's care for some years. Although history does not say, old Madam Legh, with her clearness of perception, penetration and sharp delineation of character, probably saw through the learned doctor and realized the true nature of the man. Speaking from bitter experience she gives vent to some very scathing remarks about the evils and dangers of University life, and of the harpies who make what they can out of "young acres":

"There is so much idill drunken acquaintance and designing women to marrying young acres at their own dispos,"

setting her face very much against her grandson Fleetwood's entering the University.

There were, however, letters passing between Brasenose and Lyme up to Peter's death in 1743-4, Dr. Shippen dying himself the following year, 1745.

A year or two after Fanny's fourth marriage Peg married herself the Rev. William Denny of Raveningham, Norfolk, one of the members of an old and distinguished family in the county.

## LYME LETTERS

There was great opposition on the part of her relations, who considered that she was making a very poor marriage. Peg, however, overcame their objections, writing that she cannot believe that either her mother or her brother can have anything to say against "5 or 6 hundred a year and a father alive." The reverend gentleman was not above taking all steps he could to secure Peg's "portion," but he had to wait several years before he succeeded in doing so.

1717 The marriage proved a happy one. Peg had four children, dying at the birth of her youngest in 1717 at the age of forty. She was buried at Thurlton, Norfolk, where her husband raised a handsome marble monument to her memory, which is still in Thurlton church, bearing the following Latin inscription, of which I find at Lyme this eighteenth-century translation :

"Underneath aer deposited the Ashes of Margaret, wife of W<sup>m</sup>. Denny of Raveningham, Master of Arts and Daughter of Richard Legh of Lyme in the County of Chester Esqr, a person illustrious for the great antiquity of his family, for the largeness of his Estate, and the ingenuous endowments of his mind, but which is rarely the Companion of so great fortune, more illustrious for his probity, his candour, his piety and truly Christian principles.

"And she, a Daughter every way worthy of so honourable a Father, dyed Lamented in her fourth childbed, the 22d of May in the year of Our Lord, 1717.

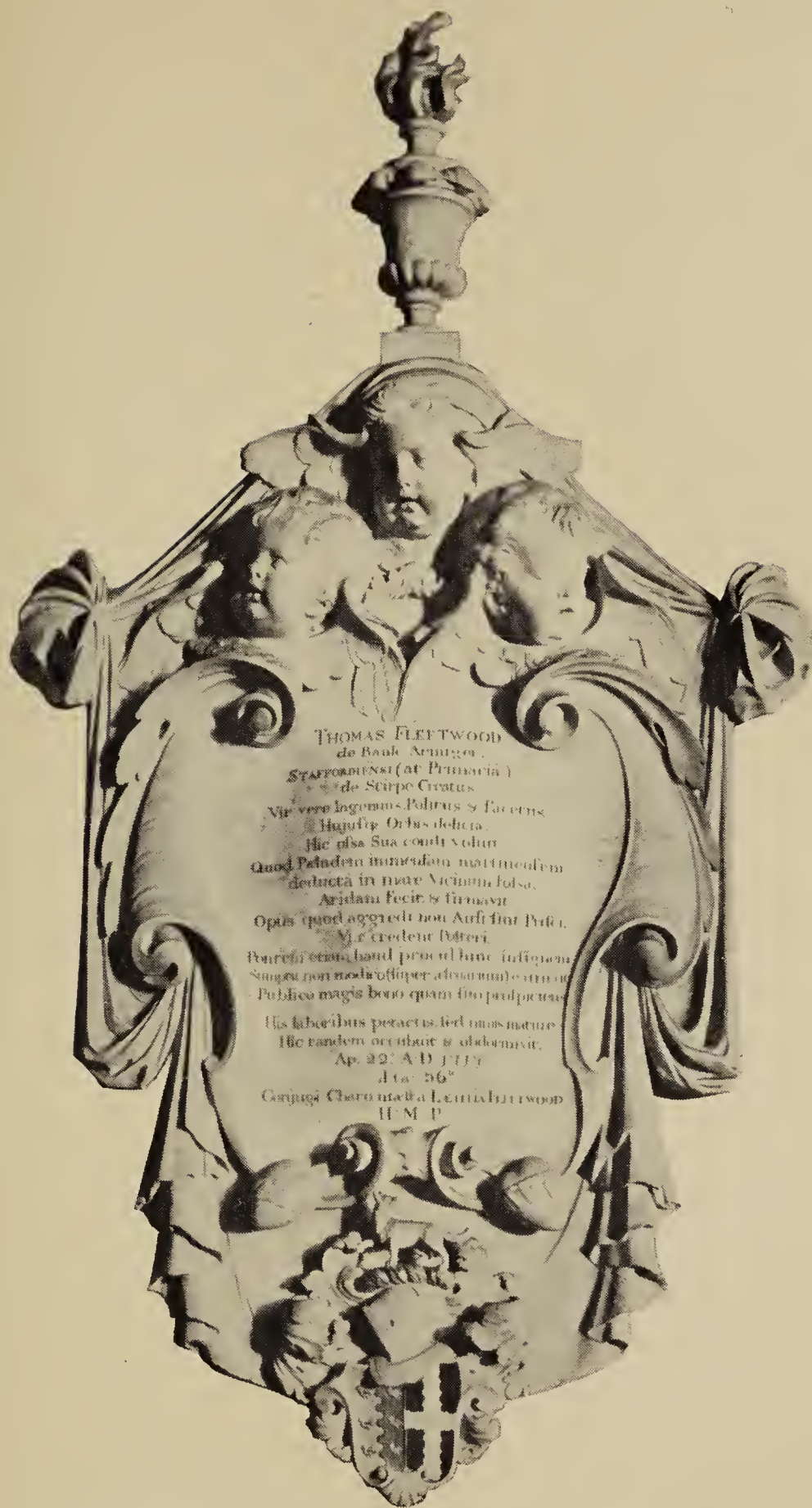
"A Woman if there be such another, not to be Matched in Many thousands.

"Oh ! how vain are the hopes of Man  
And how unstable their fortune !

"However, whether God gives or takes away  
Blessed be his Name."

1717 Of the character of Thomas Fleetwood, Lettice's second husband, we do not gather very much. He was undoubtedly a clever and capable man as shown by the work he achieved, which gained for him the reputation he deserved, but he was not a man of any outstanding personality. He is described in the obituary notice on his tomb as "polite and facetious, very much a gentleman, and the delight of all who knew him," but, while not wishing to dispute the fact, it could scarcely be regarded as





MONUMENT IN NORTH MEOLS CHURCH,  
LANCASHIRE

Erected by Lettice Fleetwood in Memory of her Second  
Husband, Thomas Fleetwood of Bank





## DR. ROBERT SHIPPEN

an unbiassed opinion, being obviously that of his despairing wife who only survived him two years.

Thomas Fleetwood died in 1717, and is buried at North Meols, near Southport, where Lettice raised a fine monument to his memory, bearing a highly eulogistic inscription.

Broken by incessant money troubles, ill-health and much sorrow, Lettice Fleetwood died herself on December 31, 1719, at the age of fifty. She describes herself in a letter written a few years before her death, as suffering much from rheumatism and as

“being reduced to my crutch, and with a heaviness and trembling at my heart. I have never had the rheumatism so much since the coronation of King William.”

She was buried beside her second husband at North Meols, and, according to her own desire, “with all privacy imaginable.”

The last five years had witnessed the deaths of no fewer than three of Richard's daughters. Lady Master in 1714, Peg Denny in 1717, and Lettice Fleetwood in 1719. Poor old Madam Legh was thus destined to outlive two of her sons—Tom and little John (drowned in the water in front of Lyme house in 1688), and five of her seven daughters (outliving seven of her thirteen children), dying herself in 1728, just before the death of Fanny Shippen.

By a merciful dispensation of Providence there is a limit to human suffering, as there is certainly a limit to human joy. A succession of heavy blows produces at last a deadening of sensation and a numbness that acts as an anodyne and mitigates the acuteness of the agony. So it was with Madam Legh. Her husband's death had stabbed her to the heart, and when she had rallied from the blow, it was to become a changed woman. She was capable of enjoying—to a certain extent—what remained to her of life, but it was with all the spring and sweetness gone from it. She retained her faculties, her intense interest in politics and everything that went on, and her keen sense of humour up to the very end.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### LYME AND THE JACOBITES

1714 THE failure of the Queen's health in 1714 made the Succession the chief question of the day.

A letter from Speaker Bromley \* to the Lord Mayor of London, written from Kensington on July 30, mentions the fatal attack which terminated the life of the Queen that very day, and betrays also the anxiety that was being felt lest disturbances, or worse, should occur :

“ Kensington, 30th July, 1714.

“ MY LORD,

“ Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> having been taken very ill this Morning, lest the Reports thereof should give occasion to ill-minded people to raise disturbances, I am directed by the Lords of Her Ma<sup>ty</sup>'s Council to acquaint your Lo<sup>p</sup> herewith, and to desire your Lo<sup>p</sup> immediately to take all possible care for preserving the peace of the City, and preventing any evill consequence on this occasion.

“ I am, my Lord,

“ Your Lo<sup>ps</sup> most obed<sup>t</sup> humble Servant

“ W. BROMLEY.”

A letter from a certain T. Assheton, written to Peter Legh at Lyme on August 3, gives a few more details of the Queen's death :

“ Dr Sr

“ I'm sorry to tell you yt ye Queen departed this life on Sunday morn: last about 10 Minutes after 7, and ye King is expected in a very short time. My Lord Barrkeley † being ordered to convey him over w<sup>th</sup> a Considerable number of Men of War. My Journey to Paris is

\* This letter from my ancestor the Right Honourable William Bromley of Baginton, Warwickshire, Secretary of State, M.P. for Oxford University, 1702-32, D.C.L., Speaker of the House of Commons, 1710, was amongst the collection of the late Gery Milner Gibson Cullum, and was given to me by him in 1919.—E. N.

† *Berkeley*, James, third Earl (1680-1736), admiral; served in the Mediterranean under Sir Cloudesley Shovel in 1704-7; First Commissioner of the Admiralty in 1717-27.



## LYME AND THE JACOBITES

put off on this melancholly occasion, and I shall be at Chester in 5 or 6 days. Ye Speaker and S<sup>r</sup> Harry [name missing] came to town this evening and ye Parliament goes upon business tomorrow."

Immediately on the Queen's death a motion for Bolingbroke's impeachment was carried, a bill of attainder passed, and his name was erased from the roll of peers. Bolingbroke fled to France to take office under the Chevalier. A newsletter, written to Lyme on March 31, 1715, describes his escape on board a sailing vessel, where, disguised as a sailor, he had to pull the ropes and man the ship like one of the crew. He got away only just in time, the warrant for his arrest reaching Dover barely twenty-four hours after he had sailed :

"News-Letter, March 31, 1715.

"... Saturday night last the L<sup>d</sup> Vis<sup>t</sup> Bullingbrook after having appeared at the play-House to avoid the approaching Storme, took ship, and about 6 on Sunday morning arrived at Dover about 12, disguised in a Long Lace Second-hand Suite of Cloathes; viz, a very Coarse Coat, a Leather pair of Breeches, and a Whig [wig] valued at 4d, with a Hazel Stick and a pair of Leather Baggs, accompanied by one La Vigne (?) wch the f<sup>r</sup> Ambassador had sent to the f<sup>r</sup> Court, and also one Cap<sup>t</sup> Morgan, w<sup>ch</sup> latter was bound for Calais upon his own affairs. His Lo<sup>sp</sup> applied himself to Cap<sup>t</sup> Galloway, bound for Calais, for his passage, and that he would pay for it, upon w<sup>ch</sup> he was rec<sup>d</sup> aboard the vessell and at 5 arrived at Calais and went Immediately to the Governor's house where he gave ord<sup>rs</sup> for a new Suit. Captain Galloway, finding his Passeng<sup>r</sup> to be Viscount Bullingbrook, begged pardon for his Rudeness in Commanding his Lo<sup>p</sup> to pull the Ropes &ct. On Monday morning two Messeng<sup>rs</sup> arrived at Dover to seize his Lo<sup>p</sup> upon some Information the Government had, but too late. Yesterday when Captain Morgan returned hither, he was taken [into custody?] 'tis presumed for having beene assistant in ye affair. They remark my Lord in his passage, being asked how he was in health, said he was Sick at Land but well at Sea; this sudden flight makes a Great Noise. Here they say for certain that our Govern<sup>t</sup> have the Copies of all the L<sup>rs</sup> [letters] from the late Queen to the Pretender, & all of those of the late Ministry, so that 'tis hoped those who shall be found Guilty will have their Due. Yesterday as the Duke of Ormond went to & returned from the House of Lords, was after an odd manner huzzaed by the populace, this popularity of his gives offence."

1715

Minor disturbances, of course, took place all over the country.

## LYME LETTERS

A newsletter written to Peter Legh at Lyme on November 11, 1714, describes rioting in the south of England :

“They write from Dorchester that some of the Dissenters have got a very fine Pretender made to be burnt upon King George’s Coronation Day ; in order thereto addressed themselves to be protected from the Tory Mobb, but were deny’d it. Upon this the Ch: Mobb grew more Audacious in the street in a tumultuous manner, damning the Presbyterians, swearing they would rescue the Pretender. To encourage them a certain Gent gave them half a hogshead of Beer, after wch with Clubs they Come & broake the heads of those who Carried him about the Town, & had they not secured themselves in a Magistrate’s house, Murder would in all appearance have ensued, yet (all ?) burnt him when the same Mobb assaulted them again, Crying out ‘ Who dare disowne the Pretender ? ’ & abundance of such treasonable Stuff, drinking Dr Sacheverell’s health & insulting the Meeting House. Dr S. who in his progress in the West, preached the Gospell & gave his Eye Water, is arrived here, pursuant to the order he received from the B<sup>p</sup> of L. as he was commanded.”

1715 Early in January 1714–15 a public Thanksgiving service took place at St. Paul’s Cathedral to celebrate the new King’s accession

“with the usual Solemnity, & H.M. with the P<sup>ce</sup> and P<sup>cess</sup> came to St Paul’s Cathedral, attended with the Privy Council, the g<sup>t</sup> Officers of State with several others of the Nobility and Gentry in town . . . the L<sup>d</sup> Mayor waited upon His Majesty at Temple Bar, streets lined by Train Bands &ct,” \*

the newsletter adding, however, “the Acclamations of Joy, Bonfires &ct were not extravagant.”

Strict measures were taken with the promoters of any disturbance :

“Mr Carnaby, formerly mentioned to be Committed to Newgate for Proclaiming the Chevalier King of Great Britain under the title of King James the 3d, is ordered to be Tryed, being found *Non Compos Mentis* is removed to Bedlam among the Lunaticks.”

In the first House of Commons which was held by George I the Tories hardly numbered fifty members, while a fatal division broke their strength in the country at large. The first act of the new Ministry was to meet a desperate attempt of the Chevalier to gain the Crown. There was no real hope of success,

\* From a newsletter at Lyme.



## LYME AND THE JACOBITES

for the active Jacobites in England were few and the Tories were broken and dispirited by the fall of their leader. The policy of Bolingbroke—as Secretary of State to James Stuart—was to defer action till he had secured help from Charles XII of Sweden, and had induced Louis XIV to land a few thousand men to aid a Jacobite rising. But at the moment of action Louis XIV's death ruined all hope of aid from France, and, in spite of Bolingbroke's counsel, James Stuart resolved to act alone.

Peter Legh, as we have seen elsewhere, kept clear of politics, having no desire to repeat his experiences of 1694 and 1696, when he spent several months a prisoner both in Chester Castle and in the Tower of London.\* Like others of the Tory gentlemen of the day he withdrew himself more and more from public affairs, contenting himself with drinking the health of “the King over the water” in the beautiful Jacobite glasses still preserved at Lyme, and, like the bulk of the English people, being averse to embarking on any doubtful ventures. It was rather surprising that he should not have got into trouble again, considering his well-known Jacobite sympathies, the very uncompromising attitude of his mother, old Madam Legh, her love of the Jacobites and her hatred and abomination of the Whigs. The fact also, that both his brother Richard and his youngest brother Francis (of whom I shall speak in a subsequent chapter) went out for the Chevalier, should have gone against him.

That his position was for some years a very critical one, we gather through a letter from his life-long friend and correspondent Sir Francis Leicester of Tabley. At the end of a long letter containing some acrimonious and rather outspoken comments, connected with some business transaction, Sir Francis ends with these beautiful and touching words, which we know came straight from his heart :

“ You may depend upon one thing, if it should happen—as I hope in 1715 God it will not, neither do I see any likelihood of it—that the Government shold take your Estates, you shall enjoy one half God blesses me with with the same faith, freedom and cheerfulness and candour as myself the other half, and that as long as I have sixpence in the world.”

\* See “ The House of Lyme,” pp. 361 to 366.

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Happily there was no necessity for this sacrifice on the part of Sir Francis Leicester, but that he was prepared to make it (and there is no reason to suppose that this was an empty promise) is an instance of devoted friendship rarely met with in this or any other age.

It was necessary to exercise more caution than ever in both writing and speaking. Will Shippen,\* the politician, expresses to Peter on April 15, 1715, his regret at being unable to send him any news, "because all our letters are opened in defiance of an Act of Parliament." Lady Leicester, wife of Sir Francis, writes to Frances Legh, Peter's wife, on May 19, 1715, that

"everyone is discontented, and such freedom in writing and talking, sure never was before as here is now—what it will end in, God knows. I have not seen any of the Court."

She contents herself therefore with some innocuous talk of the prevailing fashions, hoping that the company expected at Lyme "will carrie you ye fashions much better than one can send you any account of by writing."

It was evidently considered to be safer to commit as little as possible to paper, for the newsletters cease after August 20, 1715, and do not recommence until April 6, 1717.

The new King, honest and straightforward though he might be, was in no sense a sovereign to inspire either loyalty or devotion, while a certain brusqueness of manner, in spite of some kingly qualities, prevented him from ever attaining any popularity. He could hardly speak the English language, all his sympathies were with the country he had left, and his chief aim was to use the power of his new monarchy to strengthen his position as Elector of Hanover. His private life was as immoral as that of any of the Stuarts. His entry into London, seated between his two German mistresses, showed a disregard for decency that was never exceeded by Charles II, while his cold-blooded cruelty to his uncrowned Queen, poor lovely sinning Sophia Dorothea of Zelle, imprisoned for life, eating her heart out in a German fortress, is perhaps unparalleled in the annals of English history. Be-

\* See p. 258.



## LYME AND THE JACOBITES

lieving that he owed his throne to the Whigs, he looked on their support as the true basis of his monarchy, thereby doubling their power and conniving at his own displacement. He assumed his position as a constitutional sovereign and governed but in name, the whole power being in the hands of the Whigs, who remained supreme for over thirty years.

A newsletter, written from London to Lyme on July 16, 1715, mentions the new King as “diverting” himself on the river with the Prince and Princess of Wales, and being subjected to some insult by the watermen :

“London, July 16, 1715.

“Tuesday last ye P<sup>ce</sup> & P<sup>cess</sup> diverted themselves by water up & down the River Thames; ye next day ye King, accompanied by their Royal Highnesses took also the same diversion, as did the P<sup>ce</sup> & P<sup>cess</sup> when ’twas observed that ye factious Watermen’s Language was full of Base Reflections not fit to be mentioned.”

1715

Disorders were breaking out all over the country, the Meeting Houses all being attacked and many burnt down. A newsletter of July 19, 1715, says :

“At Wolverhampton when they pulled down ye Meeting house, one of ye Leaders getting on ye top of ye same, flourished his hatt round his head & cryed ‘God D-n K.G. & the Duke of Marl:’ att ye same time a fellow standing by as an Idle Spectator, was seized by ye Ryot<sup>rs</sup> & Charged with being a Spy & to Attone for his supposed Offence, they made him goe downe on his knees & say ‘God bless King James ye 3d.’”

During the burning of the Meeting House at Lichfield nothing was heard but “fearful Curses and Oaths with Traiterous Expression, Villains making it a Crime to drink the King’s health.”

Justice, not however tempered with mercy, was meted out with no ungenerous hand to a certain Mr. Biss, who, according to a newsletter at Lyme of November 27, 1718, was indicted six times; first, for saying that things would never be right until King James the third was restored, etc.; for this first indictment he was ordered to be set in the pillory, imprisoned for four years and to give security for his good behaviour during life. The second indictment was for calling His Majesty George I a usurper,

## LYME LETTERS

and for this offence he was to be set a second time in the pillory and fined £200. For the four other indictments he was to be fined £100 each. The wretched victim's counsel moved for "application to ye Seat of Mercy" before the execution of the sentence, but the Court adjudged that motion as "irregular."

1718 The King's birthday, May 28, was celebrated with great magnificence in 1718. There was a numerous Court at Kensington. A ball took place in one of the galleries and another in the Green House. The Duke of Newcastle\* was said to exceed "all ye nobility" for the magnificence and splendour of his equipage when he went to Kensington on the morning of the same day to offer his congratulations to his Sovereign; "his Coach was preceded by all his Domestics and also by 12 Watermen in new Cloathes, who also walked on foot 2 & 2."

The Jacobite rising of 1715, culminating in the indecisive battle of Sheriffmuir, both sides claiming the victory, broke the spirit of the Jacobites for a time, drove James Stuart again across the seas, and insured to the country a peace which lasted for many years.

\* *Newcastle*, Sir Thomas Pelham Holles (1693-1768); created first Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1715; assumed the name of Holles in 1711, on succeeding to the estates of his uncle, John Holles, last Duke of Newcastle of that family; adhered first to Townshend, but on the schism of 1717, went over to Sunderland and was made Lord Chamberlain. Though a master of political corruption, he was not himself corrupt, and he died £300,000 poorer for his half century of political life.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### ANNE LADY COVENTRY AND HER LORD

THE life of Calveley Legh is so closely associated with that of his niece Anne, Countess of Coventry, that I propose to introduce her here to my readers.

Born in 1691, she was the eldest child and only daughter of Sir Streynsham and Lady Master, and her birth took place a year after their marriage. A charming portrait of Lady Master in the possession of C. Onslow Master, Esq., which by his kind permission I am allowed to reproduce, represents her with her little daughter in her arms, a view of Lyme, her beloved home—always in her thoughts—in the background. Two sons were also born to the Master couple, Legh in 1694 and Streynsham in 1697.

All the early life of the children was spent at Codnor in Derbyshire and in the house in Red Lion Square, London, with occasional visits to Kensington or some such health resort.

In January 1706–7 little Anne fell a victim to the terrible 1706–7 scourge of small-pox which she and her brother Legh contracted in London, but which they happily recovered from without any ill effects or disfigurement.

“ My Daughter, praised be God, is well againe & goes out of her chamber but not downstairs,”

Sir Streynsham writes to Peter from Red Lion Square on January 14, 1706–7,

“ Yesterday my son Legh was taken with ye Small Pox, they appear more plaine upon him today & he is very feavorish & Sick as my Daughter was at first, but we have hopes he will get through it as his Sister hath done.”

## LYME LETTERS

Except for the mention in one of Lady Master's letters of her daughter paying a visit to Lyme with her French governess, we hear no more of Anne until her marriage to Gilbert, fourth Earl of Coventry, which took place in 1715, eight months after her mother's tragic death. There were other aspirants for the hand of the beautiful girl, "the eldest son of a Baronet" is mentioned on December 23 of the previous year, 1714, but who the young man was does not appear.

1714 Anne, who would have been twenty-three at the time of her mother's death, became a great help and comfort to her poor bereaved father. The two were inseparable companions, and throughout all her early married life and indeed up to his death in 1724, Anne kept up an animated and regular correspondence with her father, to whom she was a most excellent and devoted daughter. Poor Lady Master could never have known of the great happiness that was to come to her beloved only daughter, nor had she the satisfaction of realising that the girl was making—from a worldly point of view—an exceedingly good marriage.

A charming portrait of Anne Master, probably by Sir Godfrey Kneller, hangs in the Bright Gallery at Lyme. This shows her to have had large dark eyes, dark hair, regular features, a very white complexion and a great look of breeding and distinction. Where Lord Coventry made her acquaintance we do not know, and we have, unfortunately, no details of the courtship, but he seems to have fallen desperately in love with the beautiful girl who was to become his second wife. His impatience to secure his bride and her deep mourning may perhaps have accounted for the very small number of relations who were present at the wedding, which took place at the Guildhall Chapel on June 27, 1715.

Gilbert, fourth Earl of Coventry, was born about 1668. He succeeded his nephew, Thomas, third Earl in 1712, and would have been about forty-seven at the time of his second marriage, there being a disparity of twenty-four years between his bride and himself. His first wife was a cousin, Dorothy, daughter of the Honourable Francis Coventry, a younger son of the Lord Keeper, and a brother, therefore, of Anne, Lady Savile, second





Lady Master Daug<sup>r</sup> of  
Rich<sup>d</sup>. Legh of Lyme Esq<sup>r</sup>  
& her Daug<sup>r</sup> Anne.

LADY MASTER AND HER DAUGHTER ANNE

*Copy by J. D'Agar, from the original by Sir Godfrey Kneller in the possession  
of C. Onslow Master, Esq.*





## ANNE LADY COVENTRY

wife of Sir Thomas Chicheley. By his first wife Dorothy, who died in 1704, Lord Coventry had only one child, a daughter, Anne, who married on January 5, 1714-15, Sir William Carew of Anthony, Cornwall, so that her wedding took place only five months before her father's second marriage.

Although we have no details we can fancy the excitement there must have been in the family, the buying of the trousseau, all the bustle and arrangements for the hurried wedding, the importance of old Madam Legh and how she must have enjoyed all the fuss and preparation in which, one may be quite sure, she took a very leading part.

Sir Streynsham seems to have lavished the most magnificent jewelry upon his only daughter, of which the following list—in Lady Coventry's handwriting—is amongst the Master papers :

“ A List of Jewells which my Father gave me on my marriage in 1715 : 1715

1 Large Pearl Necklace of 41 beads. A small hook or loop to it of 12 Spark Diamonds.

A pair of Diamond Pendants, containing 4 Diamonds.

1 Brilliant in a Ring.

1 D<sup>o</sup> less that my Mother gave me wch she used to wear.

1 Pair of Pendant Pearls with 2 small Brilliant Tops.

1 Sapphire set round with 16 small Brilliants.

1 Girdle buckle of 17 small Rose Diamonds.”

The wedding breakfast appears to have taken place at Hampstead Heath. Peter and Frances were not present, and only a very small party of eleven sat down to the sumptuous repast. From a paper amongst the Master MSS. we get the following names of those present, set down in Sir Streynsham Master's handwriting. These included the bride's grandmother, old Madam Legh, her uncle, Calveley Legh, the bridegroom's son-in-law and daughter, Sir William and Lady Carew, but who Lady Crossley and Mr. Tuxon were we have no idea.

“ Company at Dinner

2 Lord Coventry and Lady

2 Sir Will: Carew and Lady

1 Lady Crossley

1 Mother Legh

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- I Mr Tuxon
- I Bro: Calveley Legh
- I Mr Veal, Lord Low's Chaplin
- I Mr Sandbeck, his Gentlem<sup>n</sup>

“ II at Table.”

The following is the list of the bill-of-fare, endorsed in Sir Streynsham's handwriting, the prices being attached to the different dishes. By “ My Lord's Cook ” being mentioned and the sum of £I 1s. 6d. being paid to him, it is probable that he must have had something to do with the cooking :

“ Bill for dinner at Hampstead Heath June 27th 1715. 7l 14.

|                                              | £. | s. | d. |
|----------------------------------------------|----|----|----|
| Bread and Beere . . . . .                    | 0  | 3. | 6. |
| Wine . . . . .                               | 2. | 6. |    |
| Lamb and Colyflowers . . . . .               | 0. | 3. | 6. |
| Mutton and Beans . . . . .                   | 0. | 4. | 6. |
| Baccon and Beans . . . . .                   | 0. | 2. | 6. |
| Fricatie . . . . .                           | 0. | 6. | 6. |
| pudin . . . . .                              | 0. | 2. | 6. |
| Ducks . . . . .                              | 0. | 5. | 0. |
| Rabitts . . . . .                            | 0. | 3. | 0. |
| Chickins . . . . .                           | 0. | 6. | 0. |
| peas . . . . .                               | 0. | 2. | 0. |
| pastrey . . . . .                            | 0. | 6. | 0. |
| Sallitt Oyle and Ving <sup>r</sup> . . . . . | 0. | 2. | 0. |
| Discert . . . . .                            | 1. | 0. | 0. |
| to ye Sarvants . . . . .                     | 0. | 4. | 6. |
| Horses . . . . .                             | 0. | 6. | 6. |
| Lemons and Sugar . . . . .                   | 0. | 1. | 4. |

|                            |    |    |    |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|
| June 27, 1715.             | 6. | 5. | 4. |
| To my Lord's Cook. . . . . | 1. | 1. | 6. |
| To 3 Servants. . . . .     | 0. | 7. | 6. |

7. 14. 4.

To Gins 7. 10. 6.  
Silver 3. 6.”

Three days later a dinner, at which the same company assembled, took place at Pontack's in Abchurch Lane. This was a tavern, and the most fashionable eating-house in London at this date. The prices of the different dishes are all given, and the sum of £22 8s. 6d., including wine, was expended, practically £2 a head, which seems rather excessive for those days. On the



# ANNE LADY COVENTRY

other hand, £5 1s. for wine, ale and “drinke for ye Servants” does not sound anything out of the way, considering the hard drinking of the time and the fact that the list contains champagne and hermitage, both expensive wines.

|                                      | £.  | s.  | d.   |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|
| “Meate and Fructe . . . . .          | 17. | 0.  | 0.   |
| Ale . . . . .                        | 0.  | 2.  | 0.   |
| Pd at ye barr . . . . .              | 0.  | 0.  | 6.   |
| Coffee. . . . .                      | 0.  | 2.  | 6.   |
| Drinks for ye Servants . . . . .     | 0.  | 8.  | 0.   |
| Tobacco . . . . .                    | 0.  | 0.  | 6.   |
| Mountaine . . . . .                  | 0.  | 3.  | 0.   |
| Costie rostie [Côte Rotie] . . . . . | 0.  | 7.  | 0.   |
| Burgundy . . . . .                   | 0.  | 7.  | 0.   |
| Hermitage . . . . .                  | 1.  | 1.  | 0.   |
| Pontac . . . . .                     | 0.  | 5.  | 0.   |
| Oporto . . . . .                     | 0.  | 14. | 0.   |
| French wine . . . . .                | 0.  | 3.  | 0.   |
| Champaighn . . . . .                 | 1.  | 15. | 0.   |
|                                      | 22. | 8.  | 6.   |
| Drawers &c                           |     | 9.  | 3.   |
| Paid gold                            | 22. | 11. | 9.   |
| Silver . . . . .                     |     | 6.  |      |
| Coach home                           |     | 1.  | 6.   |
|                                      | 22. | 19. | 3.   |
| Seting up ye coach                   |     | 1.  | 0.   |
|                                      | 23  | —   | 3.”* |

Where the newly married pair spent their honeymoon we do not know. Nothing is heard of their movements between June 30, and July 9. It is probable that they spent the first ten days of their married life in London. On July 9 Sir Streynsham Master writes to Peter Legh from Red Lion Square, thanking his brother-in-law for his congratulations on the auspicious event :

“Sr

“Yors congratulating me upon my Daughter’s Marryage is very acceptable. She went with her Spouse on Thursday last towards Worcestershire where they will not be arrived before they will be overtaken with desire for my Lord’s Returne.”

\* These entries appeared in “Notes and Queries,” March 24, 1917, 12 S. III. A correspondent to that paper adds, with truth, that the calculations seem rather shaky, but that the value of the guinea, according to these bills, would appear to have been £1 1s. 6d. at that date.

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On the same day Lady Coventry writes to her father from Broadway, within eleven miles of Croombe, which, owing to the bad roads and the slow travelling in the heavy coaches of the day, would have been considered quite a long distance. Owing to an accident occurring to the coach, they were detained at Oxford :

“ Broadway, July 9th.

1715 “ DEAR SIR,

“ We are got safe here which is within 11 miles of Croombe, and this being the post house, I take this opportunity of writing. The roads yesterday were very bad and we very ill tired, but the thoughts of our journey being att an end tonight keeps up our spirits. When we came about a mile on the tother side of Oxford one of the large buckels to the Coach braces broke, so we were forced to stop in Oxford and eat a peece of meat. Tho’ we did not send to anybody the ringers found us out, and as we did go out of town we sent a how-de-ye to Brasen Noze. My Lord joyns with me in Duty & service and had writ but that I took itt upon me to assure you Sir, that I am, Sir,

“ Your very obedient Humble Servant

“ & Dutyfull Daughter

“ ANNE COVENTRY.

“ Our Duty and Service to Grandmama. I would writ to her if my time would permit.” \*

This is indorsed by Sir Streynsham, as were all his letters :

“ Broadway, July 9th 1715, Daughter Coventry, rec<sup>d</sup> in London Ditto 11th, answered Ditto 14th.”

It will be observed that the same formal and stilted language between children and their parents was still the fashion. Lady Coventry never addresses her father otherwise than as “ Dear Sir,” ending her letters always in the same way, “ Your dutiful Daughter and obedient, humble servant ” ; while Lord Coventry’s letters to his father-in-law are even more ceremonious, terminating with duty and service from his “ most obedient son-in-law and humble servant.”

On July 16 Anne writes to her father again from Croombe, where her reception by the county left nothing to be desired and evidently gave her much gratification. Croombe she describes

\* Master papers.



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as "a very good old house and in better order than I expected to find it." Lord Coventry had had to leave his bride for a few days, having gone with her uncle Calveley to Hitcoate, another property he possessed in Gloucestershire. She evidently felt somewhat solitary "now in the great house all alone."

"DEAR SIR,

"I received yours this Morning for which I returne you thanks. My Lord with his duty & service bid me tell you he is much ashamed he has not yet writ to you, but what with the continued hurry of Company & bussiness (which he had to do in Case he was Obliged to return to London) that that was the thing that prevented him, but he will be sure not to be out of the way when he is wanted. He is this day gone with Uncle Calveley to his seat in Gloucestershire to stay till Monday. Sir William Carew and Lady Anne will mett him there tonight, and on Monday they all come to me att Croombe, so that I am now in a great house all allone. Nothing can make this place dull but the want of the Company I have this day parted with. Itt is a very plentyfull woody pleasant Country, the house is a very good old one, and in better order than I did expect to find itt, tho' there is yet a great deal to be done to itt, the parkes and gardens are very pleasant and the Air and prospect Nothing can be better." \*

The Croombe that Anne Coventry describes was thrice burnt down. Once in Lord Keeper Coventry's time, and secondly in that of his son, and thirdly, about 1750, when it was rebuilt by Capability Brown. Nash, in his "History of Worcestershire," mentions it as having rooms "justly and conveniently disposed," and filled with beautiful furniture, tapestry and "French mirrors." William Dean in his "Historical and descriptive account of Croombe d'Abitot" (1824) says :

"Though rather too low for its extent and plain in its architecture, the house is large and commodious, having two handsome fronts, one to the North, and the other to the South, flanked at each corner by a square tower of no particular height."

The park he describes as having enchanting stretches of verdant ground, clustering trees, spreading groves, winding waters, and herds of noble deer.

Lady Coventry gives a description of the warmth of her

\* Master papers.

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reception by the county, and the excitement everywhere at the home-coming of Lord Coventry and his young bride, the fame of whose beauty had spread to the remotest corner of Worcestershire.

“As for the bells & Musick I thought they would never cease. All the Country mett us I think, and every day since we have been in a hurry. My Lord has taken me in to every hole and corner, which whenever I do go I am ready to be pulled in pieces, people of all sorts comes aboute me, some to kiss my hand and others to give me joy & all the good wishes & prayers imaginable, in short was I an Angel, more could not be say'd or done.

“This Air agrees very well with all the living creatures that I brought, as well as with me, for every one of us grows fat. I am glad Dear Sir to hear you are so busy, for I hope you will the sooner have done, that we may be so happy as to see you at Croombe, where you will be as hearty wellcome to My Lord as to her that is, Dear Sir,

“Your ever Dutyfull Daughter & Humble Servant

“A. COVENTRY.

“All upon the road hither itt is reported that My Lord is married to a vast out-Landish fortune that came over with King George, upon which My Lord calls me his Indian Queen.” \*

Two days later, on July 18, Lord Coventry writes to his father-in-law from Hitcoate, fully appreciative of his good fortune in securing so charming a bride :

“Hitcoate, 18th July, 1715.

“WORTHY SIR,

“I am favoured with yours, which found us both safe Arriv'd and well at Croombe, and I would not this long have neglected paying my Duty and returning my thanks for all your great favoures, had I not so lately been happily Married to so good a Wife, and in a continuall hurry of Company and Buisness ever since our Arrivall in the Country, which I hope in some Measure will plead my Excuse. Upon receipt of your letter I was preparing for a London journey, but the next post brought us an account that my Lord Oxford's † Enimes Carried it by so great a Majority, that had I been there it would have been no Servis to him, but I shall not be backwards in Attending when Occasion shall require. I came hither on Saturday last, where I met Sir William Carew and my Daughter, and tomorrow we returne to Croombe to my

\* Master papers.

† See note, p. 234.





GILBERT, FOURTH EARL OF COVENTRY

*From a Painting by Michael Dahl in the possession of C. Onslow  
Master, Esq.*









ANNE, COUNTESS OF COVENTRY

*From a Painting by J. D'Agar, in the possession of C. Onslow  
Master, Esq.*





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Wife, and are now drinking your good health which I heartily wish you may long Enjoy, begging you to Accept of my most humble Duty, assuring you that I am,

“Honoured Sir,

“Your Most Obedient Son-in-law and humble Servant

“COVENTRY.

“I hope your Venison came safe, it was sent before your letter came to my Wife, or your Orders should have been obeyed. Mr Leigh [Calveley] is here with me and much your humble Servant, as likewise is Sir William Carew and his Spouse.” \*

Lord Coventry's allusion to the possibility of his honeymoon being interrupted by a summons recalling him to the House of Lords to support Lord Oxford, refers to the latter's impeachment for high treason. After Bolingbroke's flight, Harley, with characteristic courage, refused to leave the country, and on April 11, 1715, took his seat in the House of Lords. Two days afterwards a Committee of Secresy was appointed by the House of Commons to inquire into the terms of the late Peace (Utrecht), and the conduct of the Ministers. On July 9 the report was received, and on the 10th Lord Coningsby's † motion “That this House will impeach Robert Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer of high treason and other Crimes and misdemeanours” was carried without a division. On the previous day, July 9, Lord Coningsby had exhibited the sixteen articles of impeachment against Harley (which had been carried in the House of Commons by large majorities) at the bar of the House of Lords. The motion for his committal to the custody of the Black Rod was carried by 82 votes to 50, and on July 16 he was sent to the Tower. A newsletter, written to Lyme in this same month, July, mentions the Earl of Oxford's sale for £7000 of his house in St. James's to the King. Realising what his fate would be, Lord Oxford was evidently anxious to dispose of his house to the best advantage. Amongst the Treasury books ‡ (1714-1719, p. 69) appears this notice respecting the transaction :

\* Master papers.

† *Coningsby*, Thomas, Earl (1656?-1729); M.P. Leominster; a strong Whig, was wounded at the battle of the Boyne; a commissioner to investigate the intrigues ending in the Peace of Utrecht, and to impeach Harley in 1715.

‡ I have to thank Mr. G. E. Manwaring of the London Library for kindly supplying me with these details.

## LYME LETTERS

“The Earl of Oxford to the Vice Chamberlain. With regard to a house at St. James’s which His Majesty wishes to purchase of him, will not sell it for less to any fellow-subject, but will let H.M. have it for 7500l.—Concludes—If I were to sell Brampton Castle or Wigmore, I know no other rule to value them by but the use they are to me, and what they are worth to me.”

Another paper of January 17, 1715–16 (when presumably Harley was safely lodged in the Tower), states that he must insist that the purchase money be paid free from all charges whatsoever. It is interesting to note that Edward, second Earl of Oxford, was between 1710–16 the possessor of 3, St. James’s Square, which house from 1705 to 1710 was occupied by Schutz, the Hanoverian envoy.

After two years’ imprisonment Lord Oxford was acquitted, and the impeachment was dismissed in consequence of the failure of his prosecutors to appear. Though forbidden to go to Court, Lord Oxford continued to attend the House of Lords.

To return to the honeymooning couple at Croombe. The next account we have from them is a letter from Lady Coventry, dated August 1, 1715, acknowledging the present of some hock which Sir Streynsham had sent down to Croombe. “My Lord as well as myself is inclined to keep good hours, yet his good natured way knows not how to breed Company.” “Grand-mama” (old Madam Legh) she reports as suffering from the gout. “Tomorrow we all dine at Aunt Fountaine’s at Worcester.”



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### THE "EAGLE STONE" AND ITS POWERS

1715-16

By February 1715-16 there was great excitement over Lady Coventry's condition, and the prospect of the possibility of an heir being born the following autumn. It is touching to read of Lord Coventry's anxiety and solicitude on his wife's behalf. Every letter contains some reference to her health and prospects, and his hopes—so often expressed—that Heaven will bless them with "a brave boy." Every precaution known to the scientific and medical men of the day was to be adopted to insure, not only the safe arrival of the expected infant, but also an easy confinement.

One of the precautionary measures taken by the expectant mothers of the time was that of the constant wearing of an "Eagle Stone," supposed to possess marvellous powers. This was to be worn suspended round the neck during the whole of the nine months, to be left off only two or three weeks "before the reckoning is out." This stone,\* the *Aetites*, *Lapis aquilaris* or Eagle Stone, is mentioned in Dr. Bargrave's Museum (seventeenth century, printed by the Camden Society) :

"I bought it of an Armenian at Rome. They differ sometimes in colour. This is a kind of a rough, dark, sandy colour, and of the bigness of a good walnut," writes Dr. Bargrave; he describes it as "rare and of good value, because of its excellent qualities and use, which is by applying it to child-bearing women and to keep them from miscarriages."

So much were these stones in request, that anybody who possessed one was expected to lend it round amongst her friends. Bargrave states that his wife can scarcely keep hers at home,

\* "History and Mystery of Precious Stones," by William Jones, F.S.A., published by Bentley in 1880.

## LYME LETTERS

“and therefore she hath sewed the strings to the knitt-purse in which the stone is, for the convenience of the tying of it to the patient on occasions, and hath a box, she hath, to put the purse and stone in.”

Sir Streynsham Master was possessed of two of these rarities, which he had probably brought with him from India. He writes to his daughter on February 4, 1715-16, offering the loan of one of these treasures, but makes it quite clear that it is to be returned to him when it has served its purpose :

“DEAR NANCY,

“Your last of ye 23d last month is all I am indebted for from Croombe, which gives me ye satisfaction of both your healths, which I pray God to continue. Yesterday I delivered to your Grandmother Legh an Eagle Stone in an Indian silke Bag, a Paper sew’d upon it No 21, and in it a Paper wrot upon

“ ‘Eagle Stones, good to prevent Miscarriages of Woomen with Child, to be worne about the Neck and left off two or three weeks before the reckoning be out.’

“I had another of them which was smoothe, having been polished, which I believe was that which you write to your Grandmother about was lent to S<sup>r</sup> Fra: Leicester’s Lady.\* I desire you will, if you can, tell me where ’tis that I may have it againe, & this alsoe I would have returned to me when you have made use of it for this occasion, which I pray God send you happily over. With my Blessing to you both, I rest

“Your affectionate Father

“STREYNSHAM MASTER.” †

On the February 11, Lord Coventry writes to his father-in-law from Croombe, his whole thoughts occupied with his wife’s health and the coming event :

“ . . . Thank God, wee now Enjoy reasonable good health and hope about August next to make you a Grandfather of a brave Boy. Your Daughter inprooveing every day about the Wast [waist] especially on the right side, (God send us a happy Minute) and well after it . . . wee should be very proud of an opportunity to pay our Dutyes to you & waite on the rest of our freinds in Towne, but considering our present circumstances, I hope you will pardon us if we delay that Journey till Necessity Obleidges us & the Roads more inviting, in the meantime

\* See note, p. 232.

† Master papers.



## “EAGLE STONE,” ITS POWERS

with both our humble Dutyes to your selfe & servis to all frends that asks after us I Conclude, Sir,

“Your most Dutifull Son-in-law & humble Servant  
“COVENTRY.

“The Eagle Stone came safe to our great Sattisfaction (though we have no ill symptoms at Present) & shall thankfully be returned so soon as it has done its office.”

Further directions with regard to the Eagle Stones come from the anxious father on February 23 :

“I am glad you have rec<sup>d</sup> both the Eagle Stones, I am told by my Lady Dawes that in the time of Labour one should be tyed to the thigh to cause an easy delivery. I have another thing I brought from the Indies which 'tis said is good for a woman in labour & will send it you if you desire it or bring it with me when I come in the Summer.” \*

This same month, February 1715-16, brings Lady Coventry an amusing, gossipy letter from her stepdaughter, Lady Anne Carew, who, no doubt, anxious to interest and amuse her step-mother, sends her an account of a masked ball given by the Duke of Montagu.†

“HON<sup>RD</sup> MADAM,

“The favour Your Ladyship did me deserved a speedier acknowledgement, but I hope for pardon since I must make the same excuse I did when I last writ to Your Lady<sup>p</sup>. I am very glad to hear of my L<sup>ds</sup> being better and intend to write to his Lord<sup>p</sup> very soon. I having no better news to send to Your Lady<sup>p</sup> will trouble you wth an account I heard of a Ball the Duke of Montagu gave att his house last week which was exceeding fine. The Prince was there in Maskarade in a Dutch Bors habit. They say the King was there incog: There was severall dresses, some running footmen, some Shepherdesses, and other dresses as is usual upon such occasions. 200 hundred tickets was given to ye Prince and Princess to dispose of as they thought fit. The Entertainment was very fine, there being one long Table in the inner Room whereon was set 2 hundred and fifty Dishes of all sorts of cold things, & as soon as they were set off, the dishes were taken off and the same put whole on againe. There was also another Table where there was all

\* Master papers.

† *Montagu*, John, second Duke (1688?-1749), officiated as Lord High Constable of England at the coronation of George I, and filled other high posts. He married Mary, daughter and co-heir of John Duke of Marlborough by his wife Sarah Jennings, by whom he had three sons, who all died in the lifetime of their father.

## LYME LETTERS

sorts of rich Wines in a great plenty. The Wax Candles that night came to 2 hundred pounds. There was one Gentleman who acted the part of selling Drams, wch he did so natural that another Gentleman, to encourage him, tasted soe often that he cast up his accounts in the Room amongst the Company! The Duke himself had 5 changes of Cloathes and said nothing vexed him soe much as being disappointed of the sixth.

“ Madam,

“ Your Lady<sup>ps</sup> Obedient Daughter and humble Servant

“ A. CAREW.

“ Sir William’s & my humble Service attends Mr. Leigh [Calveley] & the rest of ye good family.” \*

1716 On the 18th of the following April, 1716, the anxious, expectant father writes again to Sir Streynsham Master reporting good news, and explaining Lady Coventry’s reasons for preferring to remain in the country during the summer months. Her father, for purely selfish reasons (disliking the idea of travelling himself), had wished her to come up to London for her confinement :

“ Croombe, 18 April, 1716.

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ The best news I can send you is that we go on very well (thank God) & wee hope, if we can avoid London Journeys, wee shall have a Boy safe in our Armes about the latter end of August or beginning of September & Joyfull to see you here with us. Mr Calveley Legh designes next week for London & will give you some reasons why your Daughter chooses to Ly inn rather in the Country than the Towne. One of them is, it never agrees with Either of our health in hott Weather, And I believe there are many Other Substantiall reasons to Sattisfy our friends why a London Journey may be very inconvenient . . . I am, Honoured Sir,

“ Your Dutifull Son-in-law & humble Servant

“ COVENTRY.

“ I returne you, Sir, many thanks for your Noble present of the Screen which is the finest I ever yet saw & will be of great use at the time of our Lying Inn.” †

Another letter from Lord Coventry to his father-in-law, bearing date September 26, 1716, speaks of a severe epidemic of what must have been influenza having run through the whole

\* Master papers.

† Master papers.



## “EAGLE STONE,” ITS POWERS

of Worcestershire. Lady Coventry appears to have suffered from it severely, causing great anxiety to her devoted husband :

“Croombe, 26 Sept. 1716.

“HONOURED SIR,

“Wee have had a sorte of Feavour which has run through most parts of this Country & my Wife has been much out of order with it, which put us all into a great fright, fearing a Miscarriage, but (thank God) by Dr Johnson’s care & the Midwife’s she is perfectly recovered & the Doctor gives us great hopes she will goe on very well . . . but he is of opinion that her time will not be till the beginning of November, so that we have been mistaken in our first Reckoning, but wee will hope that will not prevent our haveing your good Company here before the Roades are bad and the dayes much shorter & indeed wee were in hopes of seeing you with my Grandmother Legh, or I should sooner have answered your last kind letter with the account of my Daughter’s being brought to bed of a brave Boy which was very welcome news to us and hope a forerunner of the same good fortune at Croombe.” \*

But old Sir Streynsham had no intention of venturing so far so late in the year. He was evidently in great terror of the highwaymen who infested the roads, and was by no means inclined to risk either his purse or his life :

“The dayes are now so short and the nights soe long, ’tis not safe or easy travelling to you, & soe I have wrote to my Lady Clerke at Oxford, therefore if I doe not come to make your first-born a Christian, I desire you will depute a Representative for me and I will answer ye donative.”

Lady Coventry, much disappointed at the thought of her father not being with her for the birth of the long-awaited infant, begs him not to be dismayed at the thought of the highwaymen : “We have none this way, but it is about London.” She gives him advice what measures to adopt if he should happen to be attacked :

“Cousin Patty,” she tells him, “says she has more courage than you since you are afraid to venture. There is no danger if you travel with as much as you would be easy to give them should you be attacked & if so, then deliver without dispute.”

The entry as a P.S. on one of the letters that “Highwaymen robbe on Broadway Hill” must certainly have decided Sir

\* Master papers.

## LYME LETTERS

Streynsham (not famous for his courage) to refrain from venturing on so hazardous a journey.

Gallant old Madam Legh, despite her age, which must have been well over seventy, undeterred by short days, bad roads, discomforts, or highwaymen, went down to Worcestershire towards the middle of September, determined to be with her granddaughter in her hour of trial and danger. What happened, we shall never know. But the ardent hopes and prayers were destined never to be fulfilled, and no child was born to the house of Coventry. There are no letters between November 29, 1716, and February 9, 1716-17, when Sir Streynsham \* writes from Red Lion Square to Peter Legh at Lyme, reporting the distress of Lady Coventry at the loss of her dog, a pug, "Yanica," which he tells him "dyed after a patient and painful long illness"! The rest is silence.

Lord Coventry's health—never very robust—must have broken soon after. The bitterness of his disappointment, the shattering of all his fondest hopes and anticipations, and the realization that there would be no son to follow him, sapped his vitality and broke his heart, and he became more or less of an invalid from this time. A letter from his father-in-law to Lady 1717 Coventry, written from Red Lion Square on October 5, 1717, mentions two pieces of fine "Metchlepatam chintz" he is sending down for his daughter's acceptance, and for his son-in-law some

"India Rope called Cair to use in Shooting Guns in the roome of Paper. You will find some rolled round for use; if these be too big, they may be made less, the strands of ye rope not untwisted may be easily opened & rolled between ye hands like the other, they will not give and be moist in wet weather as paper will.

"These are my present to Lord Coventry, with ye addition of hearty thanks for the many favours rec<sup>d</sup> at Croombe of his Lordship & you by

"Your affectionate Father & humble Servant

"STREYNSHAM MASTER." †

But there was not to be much more shooting or any other kind of sport for poor Lord Coventry, whose earthly race was

\* Legh MSS.

† Master papers.





ANNE, COUNTESS OF COVENTRY, AND HER DOG "JANICA"

*From a Painting by J. D'Agar, in the possession of C. Onslow Master, Esq.*





## “EAGLE STONE,” ITS POWERS

nearly run. A letter written by him from Bath on August 29, 1719, to a certain Charles Parsons of Bredon, Worcestershire, who appears to have been acting for him in the management of 1719 his affairs, describes himself, though still forbidden to read or write during the period of drinking the waters, as being in better health, “the waters having given me a wonderful appetite and I begin to fill out my clothes again.” The doctor evidently wished to keep him at Bath till Michaelmas, but he owns to feeling

“jaded with the unaccomptable way of sensible people spending their time in this place, nothing but the same thing Acted over and over again, and I fear it has so farr infected me that I shall become as Idle a fellow as the best of them.” \*

He begs that Mr. Parsons will provide him with a suitable person “to be Clerk of my Kitchen,” and that he will help and advise him in various legal matters in which he had become involved, describing some adversary as “a sort of Judas.”

But Lord Coventry was not destined to live much longer. The very strenuous cure, lasting over two months, with the drastic remedies of the day evidently must have proved too much for his exhausted frame, for he died very suddenly, soon after his return to Croombe, on October 27, 1719, after only four years of married happiness with his second wife, being aged barely fifty.

Except for her devoted uncle, Calveley Legh, no one seems to have been with poor Anne Coventry at the time of her husband's sudden death. Her father writes to her on October 29, two days after the tragic event, which he only refers to after expressing his thanks for the receipt of some venison :

“This day my Mother Legh told me the sad news of your being a Widow, I pray God to comfort you and help you to bear this great affliction.” †

He proffers his services “if you find I can be assistant to you,” but he was far too selfish to think of putting himself out needlessly, and was only too glad to leave the helping and consoling to his brother-in-law, Calveley Legh. Old Madam Legh, who

\* Master papers.

† *Ibid.*

## LYME LETTERS

would certainly have gone to her granddaughter had it been possible, was indisposed and unable to travel.

In a hurried will, drawn up on half a sheet of paper on the day of his death, Lord Coventry left to his wife, besides what was settled upon her at the time of her marriage, £3000,

“All the Dressing Plate, Jewells, Pearls and endowing money and whatsoever also she brought me of that sort upon our Marryage,”

with all the furniture, beds, hangings, pictures, chairs, stools, glasses, etc., and window curtains “as have been bought and set up since our Marryage, except such furniture as hath since that time been brought to Croombe which had belonged to my house at Hitcoate.” His daughter, Lady Anne Carew, is left sole executrix.

Lady Coventry removed almost at once to Streynsham, Worcestershire, which she appears to have rented from Sir John Guise, whose wife was a daughter of Sir Francis Russell, the former owner. Endless money troubles, litigation and law-suits followed upon Lord Coventry's death, and his poor widow complains bitterly to her father of suffering from “rogues and knaves, of which since the death of my dear Lord I find there is plenty.” Her stepson, Sir William Carew, did not behave very well to her, and she seems to have experienced considerable difficulty in possessing herself of her just due :

“I got all I could out of the division at Croombe, tho' with a hard and high hand. Sir William told me my horses were dead, so I could have no others, but my coach I brought away.” \*

The new Lord Coventry—a distant cousin—disputed having to pay that part of her jointure which was to come out of the estate, putting it upon Sir William Carew, who, he asserted, was to pay it out of the personalty,

“so that we shall all go to law apace, I upon the Lord, the Lord on Sir William, and Sir William with the Lord again.” †

But she finds Lord Coventry, on the whole, very civil and considerate,

“and barring my not living at Croombe House, gives me the liberty to command his parks and royaltys as much as in my dear Lord's time.”

\* Master papers.

† *Ibid.*



## “EAGLE STONE,” ITS POWERS

She puts down all her troubles to her Lord dying so suddenly, “and only that scrape [scrap] of a Will writ in such confusion.”

Her father seems to have considered it a great advantage to her that the house she had just rented should stand low and “water round it as at Croombe, which I hope therefore will agree with you.” “As to the situation of the place,” Lady Coventry writes to her father in reply on February 1, 1719–20,

“You say it is low which is your mistake, for it stands the hihs [highest] 1720 of any seat in this part of Worcestershire, and as for water, I am sure, to my cost I find it, there is none within a long way of this place and I am forced to fetch all with horses & carts that I use.” \*

She begs that her father will come and pay her a visit in the summer “to my little house and country fare.”

The impossibility of getting her jointure and other legacies paid, and the fact of her having had to go to law to endeavour to obtain justice, landed poor Lady Coventry in serious money difficulties. “Law must be my refuge, and Chancery is an ugly place to get in,” she writes to her father in March 1720, “but since it cannot be helped, God and a good cause must be one’s comfort.”

In order to endeavour to supplement her income Lady Coventry was trying farming, on a very small scale, and with but indifferent results.

“I am become a renter and have taken a little land under Sir John Guise, to help my housekeeping & am going to buy a cow & in a little time a few sheep, what can one do? If the great ones will not let me live like a Lady, I must turn she-farmer.” †

In a letter to her father, dated March 28, 1720, she mentions the South Sea Bubble, on the point of bursting, though this was evidently not then known to the general public. Happily for herself, she had no money to invest in this fraudulent enterprise :

“We have mighty talk in the Country of the riches that will be got in the South Sea Undertaking; I hope you are an adverturer; if so, I wish you good luck.” ‡

\* Master papers.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

## LYME LETTERS

A letter written in September speaks of the South Sea "having drawn all the pence out of these parts," money evidently being very scarce, and everybody suffering from financial depression.

1724 In 1724 Lady Coventry had the misfortune to lose her father, Sir Streynsham Master, who died at the age of eighty-five on April 28 of that year, at New Hall, Lancashire, while on a visit to his eldest son, Legh. This estate Legh Master had acquired by his marriage with Margaret, one of the daughters and co-heirs of Thomas Launder of New Hall.

Into the character and work of Sir Streynsham as a public servant I do not propose to go. In his Diaries, 1675-80, published for the Government of India in 1911, edited by Sir Richard Carnac Temple, C.I.E., Sir Streynsham Master is described as being

"the greatest figure of the last quarter of the seventeenth Century between Oxenden and Pitt."

Like many another public servant, he suffered for his straightforwardness and honesty. Charged with injustice and exaction at the instance of native merchants, whose frauds he had detected, he was summarily dismissed, four days before the covenanted time of five years was expired, by the Court of Committees, who lent a willing ear to his traducers, and were too glad to get rid of a man whose ability they feared.

With all his many qualities, however, Sir Streynsham Master's was not an attractive personality. He was a typical official with all the official dread of departure from precedent, while his deliberation and extreme caution almost amounted to cowardice. Matter of fact, dry and uninteresting, he had no sense of humour or human touch, although he was liberal and had a strong feeling of affection for his family, having bestowed upon his brothers and sisters at different times no less a sum than upwards of £15,000.

In his old age his selfishness and love of ease made him averse from undertaking any duty connected with his family that might be unpleasant to himself, so he shrank from the painful task of



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ministering to and consoling his poor widowed only daughter in her heavy affliction, and showed an unconcern with her grief almost amounting to indifference, which proceeded mainly from his intense dislike of travelling, and his real and rather contemptible terror of encountering highwaymen.

Sir Streynsham's will directed that he should be buried at the discretion of his younger son Streynsham, but not within a church or chapel, and that a tomb should be erected; his last wishes, however, seem to have been completely disregarded, for he is buried beside his second wife in the Legh chapel of Macclesfield Church, Cheshire, and there is no tomb.

Amongst the Master papers is an Order to Lady Coventry to <sup>1727</sup> attend the Coronation of George II and his Queen, Caroline of Anspach, a copy of which, through the courtesy of the late Mr. J. H. Master, I possess. Except for the term “cousin” being omitted the formula is precisely the same, word for word, as that adopted at the coronations of King Edward VII and his present Majesty. Whether Lady Coventry did not send an immediate answer or not I do not know, but there is a second mandate, signed by the Earl of Sussex,\* Deputy Earl Marshal of England, but without the signature of the Sovereign, in which he courteously reminds her of her omission.

Three years after the death of her father, Sir Streynsham Master, Lady Coventry lost her devoted uncle, Calveley Legh, who died at Bath, aged forty-five, on April 28, 1727, only a little more than three weeks before the D.C.L. at Oxford was conferred upon him. In his “Diary” (Vol. IX, p. 302), Hearne speaks of Calveley Legh as being “a terrible hard drinker, which shortened his life.” Whether this was so, we do not know, but the fact remains that he was all his life most devotedly attached to his niece, and was her constant companion, never sparing himself in her service. He is buried in Bath Abbey, where, on the wall

\* *Sussex*, Talbot Yelverton, second Viscount Longueville, who was created, 26th of September, 1717, Earl of Sussex, with remainder in default of his own male issue, to his brother, the Hon. Henry Yelverton, and the heirs male of his body. Lord Sussex was appointed Deputy Earl Marshal of England in 1725, and he officiated as such at the coronation of George II. (“Burke's Extinct and Dormant Peerage”).

## LYME LETTERS

in the north transept, there is a bas-relief to his memory, with the Legh Arms and an inscription :

“ Near this place lyeth the Body of

“ CALVELEY LEGH, M.D.

Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxon.

He was the 4th son of Richard Legh of Lyme in the County Palatine of Chester, Esquire, by Elizabeth his wife, eldest daughter of Sr Thomas Chicheley, K<sup>t</sup>, Privy Purser to King Charles the 1st.

Privy Councillor, Master of the Ordnance and Chancellor of the Dutchy of Lancaster in the Reign of King Charles the 2nd, who departed this life the 25<sup>th</sup> day of April

Ann Dom 1727 Aetatis Suae 45.”

His death therefore and that of her beloved grandmother, old Madam Legh, which occurred the following May, deprived her, 1728 with the exception of her uncle Peter, of the last of her near relations, and left her more lonely and desolate than ever.

In October 1730, Lady Coventry paid a long visit to her 1730 uncle Peter at Lyme. He was in bad health and very much depressed, having never got over his wife's death in 1728. Lady Coventry's visit was therefore a great pleasure to him, and he acknowledges, in a letter to his great friend Sir Francis Leicester \* of Tabley, the present of some fruit, “very seasonable and welcome during Lady Coventry's visit.”

Sometime in the summer of 1738 Lady Coventry removed from Streynsham Court, where she had evidently endeared herself to all both rich and poor, to Holt Castle, also in Worcestershire. Her departure was made the occasion of a metrical farewell, addressed to her by Mr. H. Gresley, an Oxford student, and a son of the Rector of Streynsham. In offering it to Lady Coventry for her acceptance, Mr. Gresley describes his effort as “a low and trifling performance,” but nevertheless inspired by sentiments of gratitude, which he would willingly show by this testimony of his respect that her many civilities had not been conferred on the unthankful. The poem is too long to trans-

\* See note, p. 232.



## “EAGLE STONE,” ITS POWERS

cribe, but I give an extract from the opening verses as a specimen of the amateur poetry of the day :

“MADAM,  
While Crowds, who now their last sad parting wait,  
A melancholy throng, surround your gate,  
That hospitable gate, from whence before  
Ne’er sorrowing went, the wretched and the Poor ;  
Permit a Muse, whom Gratitude inspires  
Whom Sense of Worth and obligation fires  
To Count those Blessings which your Presence give,  
Blessings, which we may never more receive  
And as with warmest zeal, I sing your Praise  
Pardon this rude, these undigested lays.”

Thirty-three years after Lord Coventry’s death Lady 1752 Coventry married, for the second time, on December 15, 1752, a Worcestershire neighbour, a widower, Edmund Pytts of Kyre, a fine house, in the same county. His first wife, whom he had married in 1726, was Susanna Collet, and by her he had a large family, to whom Lady Coventry proved a kind stepmother. A congratulatory ode was addressed to the newly married pair by an anonymous admirer, who describes them as follows :

“A happy Pair (truth I’ll not smother)  
By fate pick’d out for one another.  
. . . . .  
May you (blest Pair) secure from harms  
Grow old in one another’s Arms,  
And when you’re seen no longer here,  
Be mounted to a higher Sphere,  
Where from that Paradise above the Skies  
Holt will be barren in your eyes.”

These kind wishes were not destined to be fulfilled, for Edmund Pytts died on November 24, 1753, aged fifty-seven, after only eleven months of married happiness with his second wife. He is buried at Holt, and a monument in the church there, erected to his memory by Lady Coventry, bears the following inscription :

“Under this tomb are interred the remains of Edmund Pytts Esq of Kyre in this County for which he was returned Representative in Parliament in the memorable contested election of 1741 & continued

## LYME LETTERS

to serve the County & Kingdom in that Station with unabated Independance until his death."

Lady Coventry survived her second husband very many years. Nash, in his description of Croombe d'Abitot, mentions her : " This lady I saw enjoying perfect memory and good health, approaching fast to 90 years of age in the year 1779."

Lady Coventry lived to the great age of ninety-six, dying at Holt Castle. She was buried in Holt Church, beside her second husband, in 1788.





LADY COVENTRY IN HER OLD AGE WHEN BLIND

*From a Pastel, artist unknown, in the possession of C. Onslow Master, Esq.*





## CHAPTER XXXV

### FRANCIS LEGH

WITH the life of Francis, sixth son and thirteenth and last child of Richard and Elizabeth Legh, I shall complete my account of the offshoots of the House of Lyme.

His birth, which took place on March 6, 1685-6, very nearly cost his mother her life. Six days after her confinement serious symptoms set in, and for many weeks she lay between life and death. Her recovery was mainly due to her own splendid constitution, the nursing of her midwife and the care of her devoted husband, for two of the most celebrated doctors of the day were (perhaps fortunately for herself) unable to attend her.

Francis can only have been some seventeen months old at the time of his father's death in 1687, and with his other brothers and younger sisters was left at Lyme when old Madam Legh made London her chief residence. We have no record of where Francis received his early education. He was most probably sent to the same preparatory school at Warrington as his elder brother Calveley, where, owing to the want of proper attention, supervision and discipline, he probably contracted the same habits of extravagance, as he is constantly reported as being much in debt. He showed in early youth a great desire for the sea, and it was accordingly decided by old Madam Legh and his eldest brother Peter that he should adopt the navy as his profession.

The earliest letter we have from Francis is one written from London on November 2, 1703, to a certain Mr. Bowles at 1703 Deal, who must evidently have been a species of money-lender or pawnbroker. In this letter Francis begs to know when he may receive his watch (probably in pawn) and requests the said Bowles to let him know the amount of money he still owes. The

## LYME LETTERS

reply, Francis begs, may be sent to his brother Tom's house in Devonshire Street, which Tom was at that time sharing with his mother.

Old Madam Legh writes to Peter in great distress in an undated letter of about this date, mentioning how evil-disposed persons are endeavouring to dissuade Francis—or Frank as he is generally called—from going to sea :

“he meets with peepil [people] that dus [does] discourage him from going to sea by telling him that they are to be sent to the West Indeyes to those sickly Islands on purpose to be lost because Captain Bertie is not a Whig. I pray God direct all things for the best, for these are sad times.”

Happily these evil counsellors were disregarded, for in December of this same year, 1703, Francis Legh was—at the age of seventeen—admitted, probably as volunteer, to the *Panther*, a 50-gun ship, a 4th-rater, carrying 280 men, and one of the smallest two-decked vessels in the fleet. It was the custom in Queen Anne's reign for gentlemen's sons, anxious to go to sea, to be admitted first as volunteers between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. After serving four years they were to become midshipmen, and at the end of two more years, after passing an examination, they blossomed into lieutenants.

The sailors of Queen Anne's day were worthy successors of those who had repulsed the Armada, and who fought under Blake. Indifferently fed they were and very irregularly paid, but they continued to uphold the finest traditions of the British Navy, showing great powers of endurance and fighting with indomitable pluck.

Had the food been wholesome and good, the scale of victualling might have been sufficient—or nearly so, but fresh provisions were never served out as opportunity offered, and this resulted in a very disgraceful state of things and many attacks of scurvy, causing any number of deaths.

The sleeping-quarters must have been quite comfortable and the bedding adequate. This, supplied by Government, consisted of hammocks with mattresses and pillows and coverlets. The sailors were dressed in red waistcoats and breeches, grey



## FRANCIS LEGH

jackets, grey woollen stockings, round-toed buckled shoes, a leather cap faced with red cotton, and blue woollen mittens. Naval officers had no regular uniform until Lord Anson's time in 1730. In the days of Queen Anne the admirals and captains wore stately flowing wigs, three-cornered hats, laced blue coats and breastplates when going into action.

In many respects conditions were quite as good \*—if not better—as they are in the navy at the present day, while the facilities for men of ability to rise from before the mast were greater than those now existing, thereby increasing the popularity and probably the efficiency of this service.

Just before sailing in the *Panther* Frank writes on December 2, 1703, a pathetic letter of farewell to his eldest brother, hoping he may be preserved from “a winding sheet of waves, to return with success.” The letter is much mutilated, and the beginning is missing altogether :

“ . . . My natural affection enclynes me always to have you in Remembrance, rendering your Health and welfare in all Respects as dear as my own, and there is nothing in my Power yt can be granted but you may request it, and Call that Request your Command ; not forgetting the many favours and kindness I have Rece<sup>d</sup> at your hands, hoping I shall be preserved from a winding sheet of waves and other misfortunes to return with success ; if upon no other account than to pay my respects for the Signal service you have done for me. Pray give my humble Respects to all our friends, and so in expectation to find you and all the rest in Health and Prosperity,

“ I remain

“ Your affectionate Loving Br

“ F. LEGH.

“ Direct to me aboard ye *Panther* at Spidhead where [I will ?] write my Duty to my Mother.”

He was for the first time in his short life to leave his home and his family, to face all the wonders and the terrors of the great unknown. He had all the hopefulness and the buoyancy of youth, and the spirit of adventure was strong within him, yet he surely must have often felt sad and homesick. One cannot wonder that his heart should rather have failed him at the thoughts of starting for an unknown destination, with the

\* “The Royal Navy,” by W. Laird Clowes.

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certainty, however, of there being fighting and dangers of all kinds in store for him. Frank Legh had a warm-hearted and generous disposition and was in many respects the most attractive of Richard's sons. With strong family affection, open-handed, responsive, and deeply grateful for any kindness done him, he possessed a special charm that endeared him to all with whom he came in contact, captivating even Queen Anne herself, who granted him special favours on more than one occasion.

There seemed every prospect of poor Frank's gloomy forebodings being realized and of his finding an ocean grave, for he was to participate in the War of the Spanish Succession, the European war which began in 1701, and ended with the Treaties of Utrecht and Rastall in 1713-14. The war began with the handing over of the fortresses in the Spanish Netherlands to the French in March 1701.\* England and Holland at once began their preparations, but neither State was able to put an army in the field in that year; England, because her peace-army was absolutely insignificant, and Holland, because she dared not act alone.

1704 The *Panther*, commanded by Captain the Hon. Peregrine Bertie,† was sent with the expedition under Sir George Rooke,‡ to participate in the siege of Gibraltar, and took part in the celebrated engagement with the French fleet under the Comte de Toulouse.§ Gibraltar was taken by the British and Dutch fleets, after a three days' siege, on July 24, 1704. The capture was made—as the war was being fought—in the interests of Charles, Archduke of Austria, but Sir George Rooke, on his own responsibility, caused the British flag to be hoisted, and took

\* Encyclopædia Britannica.

† *Bertie*, Captain the Hon. Peregrine (1679-1709), fifth son of James, first Earl of Abingdon, so created by Charles II in November 1682. He played a distinguished part in the naval battles of the War of the Spanish Succession; was captured in a desperate action in the Channel, when overpowered by vastly superior numbers, and was carried off prisoner to France, where he died in captivity.

‡ *Rooke*, Sir George (1650-1709), admiral; took part in the battle of Beachy Head; Commander-in-Chief of the Cadiz Expedition of English and Dutch ships in 1702; failed in this Expedition, but defeated and destroyed the French and Spanish Fleet at Vigo; captured Gibraltar, 1704.

§ *Toulouse*, Louis Alexandre de Bourbon, Comte de (1678-1737), legitimated son of Louis XIV by Madame de Montespan; Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet of 1704, with Victor Marie Comte d'Estrées as Chief of the Staff.



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possession of the fortress in the name of Queen Anne, whose Government ratified the occupation, the fortress remaining ever since under the British flag, and a very bright jewel in the British Crown.

The part the *Panther* took, as one of the smallest two-decked vessels, was, with the *Swallow*, a vessel of the same force, to lie some distance to windward of the British line, with some frigates and fireships, to act as a reserve in the event of the enemy's endeavouring to break through the line. The *Panther* bore a very distinguished share in the encounter, having supplied the place of one of the ships belonging to the division which was obliged to quit the line for want of shot. Captain Peregrine Bertie, the *Panther's* captain, had, during the short time he was so spiritedly engaged, ten men killed and sixteen wounded. Francis Legh escaped on this occasion without injury. He had another escape in 1703, for, just before setting sail in the *Panther*, there occurred on November 26 in the Downs, where most of the fleet were moored, one of the most terrific storms of which we have record. Between eleven and twelve at night the gale, which blew from the W.S.W. and which was accompanied by thunder and lightning, reached its height, and for eight hours did not moderate. The whole of the south of England suffered, and the damage done in London alone amounted to one million sterling. But the catastrophe is chiefly memorable on account of the terrible losses which it occasioned in the navy, greater destruction than the fleet has almost ever experienced in so short a period—before or since—either in peace or war. Tom Legh alludes to this disaster in a letter to his brother Peter, written from London on December 11, 1703 :

“ . . . Ye loss we have had in our Ships can't as yet be known, but what wee hear of att p<sup>r</sup>sent is ye Lose of 14 Men of Warr, besides Merchant Men.”

On April 17, 1705, Peter writes to Frank at Lisbon, acknowledging a letter : 1705

“ yt brought us good news of yr health after so long and Hazardous a time as you have had since you went out of England . . . Pray write

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as often as you can and let us kno' how you do proceed, both in yr sea affaires and in Spain. We hear you have had a brush with Ponty,\* we do impatiently wait to hear of the particulars."

It is difficult to realize in these days, when news from the most distant part of the world can reach us by wireless in the space of a few minutes, what the waiting and suspense must have meant to anxious relatives of those fighting in the wars of the past. Except that they knew nothing better, one would think that their agony of mind must have been almost intolerable. They could only imagine vaguely what was going on. Weeks and occasionally even months elapsed without any news, and all was surmise and conjecture. Poor old Madam Legh must have lain awake on many a stormy night and thought of her Benjamin far away on the raging sea, tossing in his hammock, or pacing the decks during the watches of the long dark winter night.

In March 1705-6, Frank was back in England, having returned with his captain, Peregrine Bertie, who had greatly distinguished himself:

"Frank is in towne," writes old Madam Legh to Peter on March 1, endeavoring to git [get] a lieutenant's place in a ship, but he and Mr Harbort wants till the first of June to make up their 4 years sarvis, and I fear that will not be allowed them . . . it is very hard upon them considering the sarveses [services] they have bin in if they will not allow them those 2 or 3 months."

1706 On March 14 of this same year we hear by a letter from Tom Legh to Peter, that Frank had been appointed to the *Ruby*, "a new built ship," also of 50 guns, to which his former captain, Peregrine Bertie, had just been named, with orders to sail, "but to what place is not yet known."

On April 13, Tom writes again, reporting that Frank

"has his matters now in readiness & his Captain tells me he will have him aboard on Monday."

On Sepember 26, 1706, Frank writes to his brother Peter

\* "Ponty" was probably Jean Bernard Desjeans, Baron de Pointis, French Admiral (1643-1707); he had been present at the battle of Beachy Head; was Rear-Admiral of the Centre at Malaga.



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from London, where he had just returned with Captain Bertie, who, however, seems to have got into serious trouble :

“ Last night I arrived safe att London. My Capt came part of ye way with a Designe to Come to Towne, but was prevented by an order that he should not leave. I believe he will be tried att a Court Marshall. Some of ye R--sia R--cs has complained against him, but w<sup>t</sup> he has done he has their hands sett to it. I am apt to believe he will be acquitted very handsomely.”

This was probably in connection with the disastrous action off the Lofoden Isles, in which a Russian Convoy, consisting of fifteen Merchantmen, under the charge of Captain Richard Haddock in the *Swallow* (probably also in conjunction with Bertie in the *Ruby*), was captured by the French. Mr. Laird Clowes, in his most interesting “The Royal Navy,” Vol. II, p. 512, puts this disaster as occurring in 1707, but the date 1706 in Frank Legh’s letter is unmistakable, and he also refers to the misfortune in a later letter of January or February 1706–7.

“ Yesterday,” Frank continues, “ our ship arrived safe in ye Downes, and as soon as she came to an Anchor I went on board and found my Captain very ill in bed of a Spotted Fever, but he is now something better. This day a Dutch Privateer was lost on these Sands [Goodwin] after a smart engagement, She & her Convoy, wth a French Man of War of 44 Guns. We are bound to Portsmouth there to clane [clean]. Direct yr Letter for me to be left att ye Post Office att Portsmouth & aboard ye Ruby, & spell my name Lee.”

No news seems to have come from Frank for several months. 1707 Tom Legh reports to Peter on May 22, 1707, that he can hear nothing, “ neither can I meet with anyone that has of late heard from his Captain,” mentioning that he will call at the Admiralty to try and obtain some tidings.

A letter from Frank to Peter from Torbay, bearing date August 18, 1707, reports his ship having been waiting for four or five months for a fair wind, and illustrates how the ships’ captains were handicapped by wind and weather in those far-off days of sailing vessels :

“ Torbay, *Ruby*, August ye 18th, 1707.

“ If I thought yt our Stay would have been so long in England I

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would have desired a line or two from my Dr Br wch would have been very acceptable.

“ We have been these 4 or 5 months Waiting for a fair Wind, & neither do I see any likelihood of one. We are very late in the year to go Such a Dismal long Voyage I am afraid they Poor Sailors before Toulone will suffer for it. We hear that place is taken I wish it may bee true, it will be of a great advantage to us, & ye prolonging of ye Warr. I hope the French has Called in all his Privateers, there is not one to be seen upon ye Coast ; 2 or 3 Days ago a Dutch Merch<sup>t</sup> Ship came in here homeward bound from France, & gave us this account : ”

He now proceeds to give full particulars of an abominably shabby trick played upon the Dutchman by the French, which I render in Frank Legh's own words :

“ Coming into ye Chops of ye Channell he [the Dutch Captain] mett with Monseuir Degée \* wth 6 Sail of French Men of War with English Colours out. He came under Degée's stern & saluted him with 7 Guns, taking him to be Comodore over a Squadron of English Men of W<sup>r</sup>. Degée fired 2 Shott into him, killed his Boatswaine & wounded several others ; he Made the Master of ye Dutchman come on board, & made him Promise him not to give any English Ship any account of his being there & ordered him to keep upon the French Coast.

“ We have passed away the time very Merrily since we have been in Torbay. My Captain is Married I believe to a very beautiful Lady, his Br Sir W. Courtney has Settled upon him on Day of Marriage a very fine house & Coach & horses. Last week I saw at Plymouth Capt Trott & Capt Warburton when we drank yr Health Heartily. This is all the News yt this wooden World affords & soe I shall beg leave to subscribe myself Yr most Affectionate Lov: Br to Command

“ whilst Fr LECH.”

By the 5th or 6th of October, 1707, the fleet was ready to sail from Spithead, and on the 9th about one hundred and thirty vessels, bound for Lisbon with merchandise, warlike stores and horses, sailed from Plymouth under convoy of the following men-of-war : Captain Edwards † of the *Cumberland*, a 3rd-rater, 80 guns, in command ; the *Devonshire*, 80 guns, Captain Watkins ; *Royal Oak*, 76 guns, Captain Baron Wyld ; the *Chester*, a 4th-

\* Probably Duguay-Trouin (Réné, 1673-1736), famous Chêf d'Escadre. The “ Biographie Universelle ” describes this incident as “ *un stratagème qui lui livra 2 vaisseaux hollandais,*” as if it were an achievement to be proud of.

† “ The Royal Navy,” by W. Laird Clowes.



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rater, 50 guns, Captain John Balchen; and the *Ruby*, commanded by Captain the Hon. Peregrine Bertie with our friend Francis Legh on board.

When scarcely clear of the Channel the convoy fell in with a vastly superior French force under the command of the Chêf d'Escadre Forbin, and had to fight at desperate odds, fourteen French men-of-war against the British five. Through the gallantry of the British captains, who, in order to give time for the merchantmen to save themselves, engaged the enemy with great stubbornness, the men fighting like lions, they successfully intercepted him, and very few of the merchantmen were taken. In other respects, however, the result of the action was most serious, involving practically the destruction or capture of the whole British force. The *Cumberland* under Captain Edwards surrendered, he being court-martialed after his return from captivity and honourably acquitted. The *Devonshire*, after making a running fight with five of the enemy ships, blew up, and Captain Watkins, with 900 of his men all perished. The *Ruby* was one of the ships that surrendered. Francis Legh is reported as having lost a leg in the desperate fighting, while his gallant captain, Peregrine Bertie, after being dangerously wounded, was carried off captive into France, where he died. So ended this most disastrous engagement, the British having to fight nearly 3 to 1.

A feature of the naval wars of those days was the vast superiority of the French ships over the English, which were outclassed in almost every respect.\* The French men-of-war seem to have been better constructed, their guns were carried in a far more convenient position, and the proportions of their vessels were superior to ours, which were too narrow for their length. There were also more facilities for storing provisions for a longer period than we possessed. Later on these defects were, of course, much remedied.

Soon after his return poor Frank was paid off. This seems to have been a source of much grief to him. Lady Clerk writes to Peter from London in an undated letter :

\* W. Laird Clowes's "The Royal Navy."

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“Poor Bro: Frank came hither Friday last and they have paid him off which I am truly sorry for. He strives to bear it with as much cheerfulness as is possible, though at the same time I know it must be no Little trouble to him yt was so fond of a ship.”

Old Madam Legh also writes much exercised about the prospects of her youngest son :

“ . . . I wish I could send you any news of Frank getting anything as yet. I doubt he will fynd want of my Lord Pembroke . . . but he has a good interest with Mr. Burchett,\* who is Secretary to the Admiralty, and my Lord Pembroke charged him that Legh should be first remembered when there was an opportunity.”

This Lord Pembroke, Thomas eighth Earl of (1656–1733), had succeeded Queen Anne’s Consort, Prince George of Denmark, as Lord High Admiral in 1708, and was evidently a very good friend to Frank, but unfortunately for the latter Pembroke did not continue in this post very long, being succeeded the following year, 1709, by Admiral Edward Russell, Earl of Orford.†

The disappointment he had suffered evidently caused poor Frank to break out into some excesses, and he must have endeavoured to drown his sorrows in wine. He writes a very penitent letter to his brother after his return from Cheshire, where he had been indulging in a certain amount of intemperance :

“ . . . Ever since, my last Extravagant Drinking in Cheshire has been a warning to me, I give you my Word I will never be Guilty of ye like again. As for my Gaming, I have made a resolution never to lose above 40 Shillings at a time. If you will give me a Guinea, I will give you Guineas for every Shilling yt I lose above 40 Shillings—the advice you give me I Receive very kindly.”

He begs that Peter will credit him with £20, as he cannot get any pay until his captain returns, and he explains that he has to fit himself out in preparation for his next cruise. He

\* *Burchett*, Josiah (1666?–1746), secretary of the Admiralty, clerk to Samuel Pepys, 1680–7; secretary to Admiral Edward Russell, 1620, and perhaps earlier; published a naval history in 1720.

† *Russell*, Admiral Edward, Earl of Orford (1653–1727), Admiral of the Blue under Torrington, whom he succeeded, 1690; with the Dutch defeated the French off Cape Barfleur, 1692; dismissed from command for not completing the destruction of the French Fleet in 1693; reinstated that same year.



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was evidently hard at work pressing men for the service, an ungrateful and expensive task, as it appears :

“ I am put upon yt Unthankful Office of Pressing, which is no little trouble to me, 'tis very expensive & have no thanks.”

An interesting letter is written by Frank to Peter on February 1710-11 20, 1710-11, in which he speaks of his return after a very fatiguing journey, “ and some narrow excape of being drowned.” He had dined with Lord Abingdon \* and the Earl of Angelsey,† who gave him good assurance of a ship very shortly, and he goes on to speak of the glories of the Queen’s “ Birth-night ” and the extravagant dresses worn by some of the company, Lady Grosvenor being reported to have spent £600 on her clothes for that evening :

“ There was a splendid Show att Court of ye Queen’s Birthnight, God be thanckt, Her Majesty is in good Health: Lady Grosvenor ‡ goes on after ye Usual manner, 600<sup>L</sup> for Birthnight cloaes [clothes] I am afraid Sir Richard is in ye same way.”

He mentions also the October Club, and the attacks by the members upon Harley § and his dubious policy :

“ The October Club, which I suppose you have heard of before Does assure Harley that they will have a thorough change in ye Ministry, and will not accept of him in their Club & nobody but what has good Estates & not one in the Government. I was told in ye Court Request || yt there is near a Hundred & 30 odd of these Gentlemen all ready. Ye Duke of Leeds ¶ desired to be of ye Club, that Honor was deny’d, but his advice would be well received. Give my service to my Sister &

\* *Abingdon*, Montagu Bertie, second Earl of Abingdon.

† *Anglesey*, Arthur Annesley, fifth Earl, Member of the Privy Council; joint Treasurer of Ireland and Treasurer at War. He married Mary, daughter of John Thompson, Lord Haversham, but died s.p.

‡ *Grosvenor*, Jane, Lady, daughter of Sir Edward Wyndham, Bart., of Orchard Wyndham, Somerset, married in 1708, as his first wife, Sir Richard Grosvenor of Eaton, Chester, fourth Baronet, M.P. for Chester, 1715-32, Mayor of Chester, 1715. In right of his Manor of Wymondely, Herts, he acted as grand cup-bearer at the coronation of George II, by presenting his Majesty the first cup of wine after he had been crowned, and had the cup as his fee.

§ *Harley*, Robert, first Earl of Oxford (see note, p. 234).

|| *Court of Requests*, established in 1493 for the recovery of small debts; superseded by County Courts.

¶ *Leeds*, Sir Thomas Danby, first Duke of Leeds (see p. 86).

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Pray tell her yt this is all ye News yt I am Master of since I have been in Towne. She may expect to hear from my Mother soon.

“ I am yr most affectionate Br.

“ FRAN: LEGH.”

The “October Club,” so called because of the “October Ale,” which was supposed to be the drink of its members, was a political club of high Tory proclivities, one of the principal clubs of Queen Anne’s reign, and had evidently only just been formed.

We next hear of Frank Legh from Chester, where he seems to have gone with Lord Anglesey and a certain Brigadier Windsor; he begs his brother to send him two horses, and speaks of “so many out of Commission, but I am continued, I believe, by the Queen’s orders.”

1711 The scandalous condition of affairs in the navy was the subject of much controversy towards the close of Queen Anne’s reign. Much of the money voted for that special service was diverted to other purposes. Incidentally the nation learnt that the sum of over one million pounds was owing for seamen’s wages, who were never paid at all. No wonder that the service was not popular, much wonder was it that the British seamen fought so well. The press-gang, the cat-o’-nine-tails and poisonous rations were features of naval life that disgraced the British navy for many years, and continued to militate against its popularity.\* Frank Legh, who appears at last to have succeeded in getting his ship by 1711, writes bitter complaints to his brother on the subject of the impossibility of obtaining any pay :

“ London, Aprile ye 28th, 1711.

“ DEAR BROTHER,

“ I must repeat my Desire once more yt you will be Pleas’d to be very speedy in getting of me Credit for ye 100<sup>ls</sup> which is Due to me. You cannot imagine how much we are straightened for want of money. I am obliged to supply my Ship with all Means of Necessary, not only that, but am att my own Expence in Raising of my Men. These things are very Hard upon us; it’s to be Hop’d in a Shorte time Mr Harley will make out wt he proposes, which is to pay off ye Debt of ye Navy. Provisions is so scarce & ye Government no Creditt, yt our Poor Men are Obliged to go to Short Allowance.”

\* “ The Royal Navy,” by W. Laird Clowes.





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*From a Painting at Lyme by an unknown artist*





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In spite of all these drawbacks, he states that "Men come in so fast, I believe I shall be Manned in 10 days or a fortnight & likewise shall be ready to saile."

He begs that Peter will give him a letter to the Duke of Ormonde \* (then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland and Commander-in-Chief, the recognized leader of the Jacobites in London), "to attend him upon ye Irish Seas, I believe a Letter from you to desire his Interest he will be glad of this Opportunity to oblige you. I will get my Lord Rivers † to back it."

Frank evidently succeeded in getting an appointment under the Duke of Ormonde, to the great delight of his mother, but apparently left his heart in the keeping of a fair lady of Chester :

"It is a great comfort to me when I heare Frank does well," Madam Legh writes to her eldest son Peter at Lyme,

"but he has some enemies that reports he is in love with young M<sup>rs</sup> Upton in Chester, but I hope he has bin so much abroad in the World that he will be wiser than to undo himself when he now lives easy ; a word of advice from you he will regard allways I hope."

A three-quarters portrait of Frank Legh, painted in middle life by an unknown artist, a slip of paper in the frame describing him as "Admiral," hangs in the Bright Gallery at Lyme. He wears a small wig, a velvet coat and embroidered waistcoat. The face is stolid and expressionless with a very heavy square jaw, and has no look of charm, breeding or distinction.

We lose sight of Frank between the years 1711 and 1714, 1711-14 when we hear of him in Dublin, still in the service of the Duke of Ormonde. A letter of 1713-14 from one Jackson mentions Frank sending kind messages to Lyme :

"Capt Legh drinks yr health, presents you with his service and expects daily to sail to attend our Lord Lieutenant."

We also hear of him ordering "2 Ratteen Coats" for which he paid the modest sum of £2 16s. 4d.

\* *Ormonde, James*, second Duke (1665-1745), eldest surviving son of Thomas, Earl of Ossory, and grandson of the great Duke of Ormonde. After the 1715 rebellion he was attainted and his estates forfeited ; he withdrew to France, August 1715.

† *Lord Rivers* (see note, p. 233).

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1715 After the attainder of the Duke, who withdrew to France in August 1715, Frank left his service and must have joined the standard of the Chevalier. Frank had always been at heart a Jacobite, and when the desperate rising of 1715 took place he impulsively threw all prudence to the winds, and determined to fight in support of the Prince whom he looked upon as his rightful King. Desperate were the odds and hopeless was the struggle, which could end only in one way.

On November 9, 1715, Frank, with the rebel army of 1400 men under General Forster,\* entered Preston, and after proclaiming the Chevalier King of England in the market-place, remained in possession of the town for some five days. Payne's "Records of the English Catholics of 1715" gives the depositions of various witnesses in the inquiry that took place, and we get some interesting details relating to the entry into Preston of the rebel army, in which Frank Legh took a leading part :

"William Baines of Prestbury husb: saith he was in Preston when the Rebels entered the town on Wednesday, [another witness says Monday] 9th of November last, and continued there until the town surrendered to the King's troops, during which time this Informant remembers John Leyburn of Nateby Esqr Came to the Mitre Inn on Thursday 10th November, armed with pistols and a sword by his side, and the said John Leyburn had two servants both of them well armed with pistols and guns, and that they mounted their horses when the King's troops came before ye Town with all their arms and accoutrements, in order to go and oppose the said troops."

After giving descriptions of various others of the rebels, the document continues :

"Captain Francis Legh, brother of Peter Leigh of Lyme Esqr Came on Thursday 10th November to the Mitre with sword and pistols in his breast and 6 or 7 Men with him, all with cockades in their hats . . . and said ' Now for King James ! ' "

The Government forces meantime advanced, assaulted the town, and on November 14 compelled General Forster to surrender to the King's troops.

\* *Forster*, Thomas (1675?-1738); James Edward, the Chevalier's general; M.P. for Northumberland, 1708-16; surrendered at Preston when in command of the rebel army; escaped from Newgate to France in 1716; died at Boulogne.



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So ended this desperate and abortive attempt, no less gallant than it was futile, which resulted in the attainder and execution the following year, 1716, of the young Earl of Derwentwater \* (captured in the struggle), despite the heroic efforts of his wife to obtain his pardon.

Frank Legh was fortunate enough to make his escape through the instrumentality of a certain Mrs. Winkley, who concealed him and gave him shelter until he was able to pass over to France. A very interesting account of what happened to him is given in an undated letter, written to Peter Legh long after the Preston disaster, by a Mr. Legh of High Legh. This gentleman was evidently most anxious to be of service, and shows himself to have behaved with great kindness to the poor fugitive :

“ The surrender at Preston was upon a Monday [some authorities say Wednesday,] and ye day after I had a letter from a Gentleman, a friend of yours, wherein he intimated yt he was apprehensive yt both yr Bro: Capts Dick and Frank were then prisoners. I was then acquainted not only with severall of ye King's officers, but ye Gen<sup>l</sup> himself, & therefore, thinking I might be of some service to yr Brothers, put a little Gould in my pockett, took horse and ridd directly to Preston, but to my great satisfaction, when I came there, I was informed yt yr Bro: Dick had more prudence than to be engaged in yt affair, & yt yr Bro: Frank, (though soe unfortunate) had made his escape, ye manner of which, as alsoe his Concealment by Mrs Whitehead, (then Mrs Winkley) I had an account of. As I had no opportunity of being then of any service to yr Bro<sup>s</sup>, I doe not remember before ever to have mentioned this affair to any one liveing except ye Gentleman above mentioned.”

Frank made his escape to France, where he remained an outlaw for the next twenty-two years. He appears to have resided chiefly at Sens in Burgundy, where he endured many hardships and privations. Efforts were made to obtain his pardon, and Henry Legh of High Legh interested himself very much in his unfortunate kinsman, for whom, had he been his own son, he could scarcely have shown more affectionate

\* *Derwentwater*, Sir James Radcliffe, third Earl (1689-1716); he was brought up at St. Germain as companion to James Stuart; married, 1710, Anna Maria, daughter of Sir John Webb, Bart., of Odstock, Wiltshire. She died in 1723.

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concern, and did all in his power to assist Peter in getting permission for his brother's return to his own country.

"Cousin Legh," Henry Legh writes to Peter on October 25 of the year 1735, or 1736,

1735 "Yesterday I met my Kinsman Assheton a sporting, when he showed me a letter from yr Bro: Capt to him and alsoe one inclosed from yr Bro: Frank to you.

"When my poor Son Dick went into France for ye recovery of his health, I ordered him to see yr Bro: Frank. As soon as he came to Paris he writt to him, & they mett at Fountainebleau, & my Son afterwards went to visit him at Sens \* in Burgogne & staid with him some days. Had my Son lived, matters were soe concerted that I have good reason to believe yr Bro: wou'd long since have been at liberty, but his death [his son's death] put a period to yt [that] scheme. There are severall ways yt you may make interest for yr Bro's Pardon, some perhaps yt you dont think of ; I shou'd therefore be glad to meett my Cos: Dick † sometime to talk ye affair over, & noething yt lyes in ye little power I have shall be wanting, who am

"Yr obedient Kinsman & hu<sup>ble</sup> Servant

"HEN: LEGH.

"My hu<sup>ble</sup> Service pray to ye Capt & yr Nephew.‡ I propose writeing to yr Bro: Frank by tomorrow's post."

Another letter from Henry Legh dated February 19, but with no year, gives further details of Frank's long banishment, and betrays also the greatest sympathy and interest in the poor exile's sad lot :

"Cos LEGH,

"I had the favour of yrs yesterday by Mr Mason. I am glad ye affair is begun, & now it is, pray push it forward otherwise it may render another attempt more hazardous as to ye success.

"The objections Lord Har: made are certainly just, but which I hope you have sufficiently obviated. Yr Bro: having soe long since quitted ye service of ye Chevalier, lived soe many years retired, & having had

\* *Sens*, capital of the department of Yonne, 70 miles S.E. of Paris, still surrounded by its old walls. In the Cathedral there is the tomb of Louis Dauphin, son of Louis XV, who died in 1765, and of his wife Marie de Saxe, who died in 1767. The chief manufactories of Sens are leather tannings and boots and shoes.

† *Dick Legh* (see p. 241).

‡ "*ye Captain*" is Dick Legh (see p. 241), and "*yr Nephew*" is Peter, eldest son of Thomas Legh, heir and ultimately successor of Peter Legh of Lyme.



## FRANCIS LEGH

noe converse nor intercourse with yt sett of men, might I think be fairly urged in his favour, as a strong indication of his future intended conduct. 20 years agoe, perhaps it might have been difficult to have restrained him from talking, or indeed acting in such a manner as wou'd of [have?] justly given offence to ye Government, but his age [he was certainly not more than 50!] infirmities & long sufferings, has, I doubt not sufficiently blunted ye edge of his gay & volitale temper, & has given him an oppertunity of reflecting on his past misbehaviour, soe yt I am perswaded, cou'd he now have ye liberty of returning into his own Country, he wou'd never again give ye least occasion for uneasiness to ye Government, nor wou'd those yt are his friends in this affair, have any reason to repent their appearing as such. I heartily wish you may succeed in yr endeavours for poor Frank, to whom in a post or two I design to write to lett him know how matters stand.

“ Yr very much obliged & hu<sup>ble</sup> Servant  
“ HEN: LEGH.”

But Frank was, alas! destined to see no more the land of 1736 his birth or the home that he loved. The authorities were obdurate in their refusal to grant his pardon, so, being unable to obtain his hoped-for release, Peter settled a competence upon his brother, for which he writes in grateful acknowledgment :

“ Sens, 10th October, 1736.

‘ DEAR BROTHR,

“ The constant affection & regard which you have always had for me, demand my most grateful acknowledg<sup>mt</sup>, but the last instance of your goodness, signified to me in a Letter which I have just now received from Cosen Legh of High Legh in settling upon me a Provision for Life, is a fresh Mark of your Generosity & Goodness, which I can never sufficiently acknowledge, permit me however to return you my most hearty Thanks & to Subscribe myself

“ Your most affectionate  
“ & most Obliged Broth<sup>r</sup>  
“ FRs LEGH.”

On the top of the letter is written “ Sens, franc ” and some undecipherable hieroglyphics. The address is in Frank's hand-writing,

“ Angleterre,  
“ Peter Legh Esq att Lyme  
“ in Cheshire  
“ by Stone Bag to Maxfield.”

## LYME LETTERS

The seal in red wax has a very pretty child's or young woman's head, in a close-fitting cap, which is tied under her chin, the hair escaping in curls from beneath it in front and from behind her head.

1737      Five months later, sometime in March 1737, death brought the release the poor sufferer had failed to obtain at any earthly tribunal. He paid dearly for his misguided action, and, after twenty-two years of banishment, far from his home, and amongst foreigners in a strange land, he died at the age of fifty-one. A letter from a certain T. Molyneux, who sends the death-certificate, gives also an account of Frank's debts, the balance of which, after the sale of his poor effects, amounted only to £25. These debts were mainly contracted in lawyer's charges and other expenses connected with his fruitless endeavours to obtain his repatriation.

“Had it not been for the charges of the Justice, which could not be avoided,”

says Molyneux,

“your poor good Brother would have dyed very little in debt.”

He also adds a pathetic detail :

“As for Medals or Pictures, of which you might be desirous, he had none.”

Some years after his death the following possessions of poor Frank's were sold :

“For a Barge, Mast, Oars, Sails, Cable, &c, 15 lb: To 20 Musketts,”

No price is set upon these, but a correspondent values them at seven shillings and sixpence apiece.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

### EPILOGUE

I now come to the final chapter of this history, and a few more pages will complete all I have to tell.

Peter Legh outlived his twelve brothers and sisters, his mother and his wife, dying at Lyme, sixteen years after the latter's death, in 1743-4, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. During the course of his long life he witnessed many changes, both social and political. Born nine years after the Restoration, he had lived under the reigns of no fewer than six sovereigns of England, Charles II, James II, William and Mary, Anne, George I, and George II. After his wife's death—a blow from which he never really recovered—he withdrew himself more and more from public affairs, and became completely absorbed in his building schemes, transforming the exterior of Lyme—as we have seen—from an Elizabethan mansion into an Italian palace. How this was accomplished I have fully described in the “House of Lyme.”

His nephew and successor, the younger Peter, eldest son of his dead brother Thomas (and who was always designated as Peter Legh, junior, to distinguish him from his uncle), acted as his amanuensis, for his uncle was a great correspondent, writing to certain of his friends, Sir Francis Leicester of Tabley, for example, every week and sometimes oftener. These letters, which had to be dictated when the old man was incapacitated by gout—as was often the case—from holding a pen, were very long, entering, as was the fashion of the day, into every small particular, the same kind of answers being, of course, received in return. Every letter is docketed and endorsed with the most meticulous and business-like care, as were all his bills and accounts.

## LYME LETTERS

After young Peter's marriage in 1737 to the heiress of Salthrop, Wilts, Martha Bennet, the young people lived for some years at Calveley, a beautiful old black and white house on the Chester side of the county, but they were a great deal at Lyme with the old man, who is described in the year before his death as having his "head much disordered."

The young couple took up their abode at Lyme in 1744, and for many years were completely happy, until sorrow and the events I have recorded in my former book came to mar the peace and joy that should have been theirs. Into their lives I do not propose to go, as there was nothing in their history of very special interest to relate, so I shall confine myself to giving a few details of their housekeeping and also of the political and social life of the middle and end of the eighteenth century.

The Church had sunk into political insignificance, and during the fifty years that preceded the religious revival at the close of Walpole's administration, we see little save a revolt against religion and churches.\* Montesquieu† is supposed to have reported on his visit to England that everyone laughed if religion was spoken of. The greater part of the prominent statesmen of the day were unbelievers in any form of Christianity, and were distinguished for the grossness and immorality of their lives. Drunkenness and bad language were considered no discredit to Walpole, while, as regards literature, the Augustan age of Anne proved to be of short duration, and the profession of letters perceptibly declined and entered upon a long period of neglect and depression.

The introduction of gin into this country in the early part of the eighteenth century gave a new impetus to drunkenness.‡ The gin shops, of which there were in London alone more than 7000 at one time, invited every passer-by to come in and get drunk

\* Green.

† *Montesquieu*, Charles de Secondat, Baron de la Brede et de (1689-1755), great French writer and traveller; published in 1721, the "*Lettres Persanes*," the work which first brought him fame.

‡ Sydney's "*England and the English in the Eighteenth Century*."



## EPILOGUE

for 1d., and dead-drunk for 2d. The "Gin Act," introduced in 1735, laying an excise of 5/- per gallon upon the spirit, passed in 1736, but did little or no good, although about 1700 gin palaces were suppressed in 1750. Much of this evil was due to the apathy of the clergy, whom Bishop Burnet described as the most lifeless in Europe, branding the clergy of his own day as "the most remiss of their labours and the least severe of their lives." A large number of them were mere Whig partisans, with no higher aim than that of promotion.

Many of these reverend gentlemen were addicted to drink themselves. A letter written from Newton, Lancashire, to Lyme in 1762, describes a certain Dr. Crouchley, "down upon the Causeway, as Ill drunk as ever man was, had to be led home."

The amount of liquor consumed in the private houses of the day is simply appalling to read of. Neither of the two Peters could be described as being given to drink, more than was the usual fashion of the day, but from the bills and accounts, brandy was bought twenty gallons at a time, and other wines in the same proportion. Hospitality and politeness demanded the necessity for imbibing large quantities of ale, wine and punch, and the custom of "toasting" was also the means of consuming more, perhaps, than the revellers themselves were aware of.

The word "toast" had its derivation from the time-honoured custom of having pieces of toast floating in the liquor—supposed to improve its flavour, especially when drunk hot. In my childhood it was the custom in Cheshire, when toasted cheese, the staple food of the county, was eaten at the end of dinner, for hot ale, with hot toast floating in it, to be handed round in a beautiful silver "loving cup," from which each guest took a sip in turn, a napkin being provided to wipe the rim after drinking, a courtesy performed by the guest himself.

Elections, of course, gave every excuse for drunkenness, and it is horrible to read of the amount of liquor that was consumed on these occasions. Here is a bill delivered at Lyme after the election in 1783 :

# LYME LETTERS

|                                             | £. | s. | d. |
|---------------------------------------------|----|----|----|
| " 6 Gentlemen's Dinners at 2/6              | 2  | 0  | 0. |
| 36 in the Club room at 2/-                  | 3  | 12 | 0. |
| 23 Servants at 1/-                          | 1  | 3  | 0. |
| 5 bottles of Madeira at 5/-                 | 1  | 3  | 0. |
| 46 bottles of Wine at 2/6½                  | 5  | 15 | 0. |
| 15 bottles of Rum and brandy                | 4  | 2  | 0. |
| ½ barrel of Ale—18 Gallons                  | 1  | 16 | 0. |
| To ditto in the Club Room                   | 1  | 16 | 0. |
| Large Parlour and Servants—200 Quarts       | 5  | 0  | 0. |
| 53 White Coats at Dinner at 8d              | 1  | 15 | 4. |
| 53 White Coats Beer—159 Quarts at 6½d.      | 3  | 19 | 6. |
| Proclaiming the Election                    | 0  | 11 | 0. |
| 12 Cakes 2/-, Sweet Oranges and tobacco 3/2 | 0  | 5  | 2. |
| Glasses broak                               | 0  | 2  | 9. |
| Chairs and tables broak                     | 0  | 12 | 0. |
| Horses hay and corn—Waiter                  | 0  | 12 | 6. |
| <hr/>                                       |    |    |    |
| £34 : 13 : 2."                              |    |    |    |

The account shows a mistake of 7/11 in favour of the tradesman.

While on the subject of the eighteenth century bills, it may be of interest to include that of a confectioner of New Bond Street, Messrs. Robinson, Harper and Hoddle, who delivered at Lyme on May 31, 1766, the following goods, probably for use on some special occasion, as sugar-made table decorations are also included :

|                                      | £. | s. | d.  |
|--------------------------------------|----|----|-----|
| " 6 <sup>lb</sup> pistachea Nuts     | 0  | 12 | 0.  |
| 3 <sup>lb</sup> Burnt Almonds        | 0  | 9  | 0.  |
| 1 <sup>lb</sup> fine Comfits         | 0  | 4  | 0.  |
| ½ <sup>lb</sup> Nonperells           | 0  | 2  | 0.  |
| 1 <sup>lb</sup> Drops of sorts       | 0  | 4  | 0.  |
| 1 <sup>lb</sup> Coloured Sugar       | 0  | 3  | 0.  |
| 4 doz: Mottoes                       | 0  | 4  | 0.  |
| 1 <sup>lb</sup> Moss & Cantells &ct. | 0  | 4  | 0.  |
| 12 <sup>lb</sup> French plumbs       | 0  | 8  | 0.  |
| 12 Peaches in Brandy & Jar           | 0  | 12 | 6.  |
| ¾ <sup>lb</sup> Brandy Cherries & do | 0  | 9  | 10½ |
| A large Flowered Temple              | 0  | 18 | 0.  |
| 2 Alcoves do                         | 0  | 15 | 0.  |
| 2 Glass Fountains                    | 0  | 15 | 0.  |
| 6 Swans                              | 0  | 3  | 0.  |
| 3 Sugar Figures                      | 0  | 12 | 0." |

With these goods are included four lemon and orange trees in



## EPILOGUE

tubs, costing 18/—, one large tree, 12/—, and large and small flowers priced at 16/—, the whole bill, including cases, etc., totalling slightly over £9.

Two stillrooms at Lyme have in them beautiful old carved oak presses where the sugar, nutmeg and stores of all descriptions were kept, and are used for the same purpose at the present day.

The poaching of game by neighbours that went on at Lyme and at Newton in the seventeenth century, and which Richard Legh so much resented, seems to have continued during the eighteenth century with even greater persistency. Peter Legh's agent, a Mr. Phelps, writes on this subject to Peter then in London, in September 1755, and appears from the account he gives to have remonstrated with the gentleman poacher, begging him to be "a little favourable amongst them," the partridges, but with little or no result :

"Mr Hardyman comes very often with 5 or 6 pointers and as many young gentlemen, and destroys the game very much on yr Estates.\* We have caught about 7 brace of partridges and if our dog had not been very old and almost done, he could have caught 50 or 60, they have been so very plentiful, but since Mr Hardyman has come so much, I am afraid we shall catch no more. I spoke to Mr. Hardyman one day and told him you kept a setting dog and did expect to have some Birds at London in the winter, therefore hoped he would be a little favourable amongst them, which are the very words I spoke to him, and he told me they were Lawless Gentlemen, but since, I hear he says he will kill every Bird he can find, and I suppose as soon as the Corn is got in, he will bring his Hounds too except he is absolutely forbid. Ld Bolingbroke † has forbid his Coming on any of his Estates, and I have also heard that the late Mr Goddard did the same."

What happened in this matter history does not say.

In England, until early in the nineteenth century, punishments for crimes were ferocious, and out of all proportion to the offence committed. To steal a horse or sheep, to steal to the amount of 40/— in a dwelling-house, or privately to the amount of 5/— in a shop, or to pick a pocket of 1/—, were offences punish-

\* Probably at Newton or Haydock, Lancashire.

† *Bolingbroke*, Frederick, second Viscount, succeeded his uncle, the great Lord Bolingbroke in 1751.

## LYME LETTERS

able with death.\* On the other hand, the attempt of a man to murder his own father was regarded in the light of a misdemeanour. Chamberlayne † tells us that beheading was only allowed to persons of quality convicted of any capital crime :

“ 'Tis true,” he adds, “ the sentence is the same with that of common persons, [hanging] *but by the Sovereign's favour, they are beheaded.*”

Burning alive was the punishment for women guilty of high or petty treason, but we are told that, “ instead of suffering the full penalty of the law, the Criminal is usually strangled before the fire takes hold of her.” ‡ A letter from one Stafford, a lawyer, to Peter Legh the younger, written on September 17, 1733, mentions that some wretched woman, for an offence not stated, was found guilty and burnt in the hand with a cold iron. She was said to have behaved “ with great impudence,” and it was only out of regard for her large family of small children that she was not transported. The horrible custom of public executions, large sums being given for good places from which to view the disgusting spectacle, had a brutalizing and degrading effect on the public character, bringing out all the primitive and savage instincts of the people.

But executions were not the only spectacles that commanded extortionate prices. From a letter amongst the Master papers we get an interesting account of the preparations for the coronation of George III, and the huge prices for most indifferent places to view the procession and ceremony that his loyal subjects were quite prepared to pay :

“ As to what the papers mention concerning the Abbey it's true, but it is a shame they have so advanced in price, for what I writ you before was Five Guineas is Ten, & so on. As to the place they said was Three Guineas, I would not give a pin for, for I am sure one cant see anything but just the top of heads, & I believe if you do not go in over night you must go by breake of Day. As to the Hall, there is no Tickets to be had but from the Duke of Ancaster.§ I wish it was in my power to secure you a Place in a Room to see the Procession, but they have likewise such

\* Sydney's “ England and the English in the Eighteenth Century.”

† Chamberlayne.

‡ “ Present State of Great Britain and Ireland,” 1758.”

§ *Ancaster*, Peregrine Bertie, third Duke (1714-1778).



## EPILOGUE

unreasonable prices too. Five Guineas and Ten, that I think the Nation is all mad to give it. A friend of mine, in New Palace Yard has let only a little Dining Room for Two Hundred and Thirty Pound, and he told me that last Coronation he let it but for Forty Pound and then thought he did well. I have been much in the Abbey this time in trying to get a place for Mrs Dowdeswell, as she at first had a mind to sit there, but however she has altered her mind, for she writ me last week that Mr Edmundstone hath secured them a Room, which I am glad of, being I think much safer and better in all respects."

Another account says all the places are gone, and none to be obtained for love or money :

"The Peers have 5 apiece & have too many Relations to be able to oblige their Acquaintance. I hope there are Scaffolds that are built very strong and safe, the best places are now 6 & 7 Guineas a seat."

It is interesting to study the conditions of domestic life during the middle and end of the eighteenth century. Servants' wages were less than a quarter of what they are now, and they had far more work to do.

The household at Lyme was a much smaller one in the middle of the eighteenth century than it had been in the seventeenth, when old Sir Peter Legh's retainers ran into some hundreds. Eleven menservants were kept by Peter Legh, junior, in 1760. These included a butler, whose wages were £20 a year, an under-butler, amongst whose recommendations was the fact that he could, if required, drive four horses very well; a cook, two footmen, a coachman, groom, postilion, groom's helper, gardener, whose wages appear to have been also £20, and a park-keeper.

In the seventeenth year of George III a tax was put on all men-servants, and in pursuance of this act Peter had to pay 15/- a year for each manservant. This did not apply to day-labourers, of whom there seem to have been a great quantity; in 1784 the tax extended to female servants, horses, carriages, wagons and carts.

There was a special formula adopted for the engaging of any servant :

"I Peter Legh Esqr, Member of Parliament for the Borough of Newton in the County of Lancaster, Do hereby Certify that I have taken George

## LYME LETTERS

Redifer of Bedworth in the County of Warwick, Barber and Chapman, into my menial service for the term of one year, which all Sheriffs, Undersheriffs, Bayliffs and others are Desired to take Notice. Given under my hand this Twentieth day of August, 1765.

“ P. LEGH.”

A butler, applying for the situation at Lyme, writes to the agent that he thinks the situation will suit him, and he is anxious to obtain it, although he hints that the wages are not quite enough. He understands, however, that he is to have Mr. Legh's old clothes, and that, although he has been told that the gentleman is “ rather tedious, there be means to please him.”

“ Tedious ” Peter certainly was, and peculiar too in some respects, but he had many qualities. In spite of his weak and rather shallow character he was a great gentleman, with a strong sense of justice and an honest desire to do his duty. He had a high idea of his own importance and much resented anything in the nature of a liberty. The following letter of complaint from an indignant lady, and Peter's answer, dealing with the matter in perfectly courteous terms but in a most emphatic way, gives a fairly good example of the character of the man. The lady's letter :

“ October 10, 1762.

“ SR,

“ I was a good deal surprised to hear that your Agent was erecting some works up on the Waste in Parr, near Penny Bridge, I apprehend this is done without your knowledge, . . . the whole belongs to me, & I cannot permit you or anyone else to make such erection without my consent & some acknowledgment being paid.”

Peter's answer :

“ MADAM,

“ I acknowledge the receipt of your Epistle, have examined the Matter of Complaint, & find my Agents have done nothing but what I will justifie, & am

“ Yr humble Servant,

“ P. LEGH.”

The year 1784 is memorable as being the first year that mails were conveyed by coaches. It is true that, as early as 1683, a penny post had been set up for the conveyance of letters and



## EPILOGUE

small parcels about London, but this undertaking was seized by the Government as being an infringement of its privileges. It was, however, the commencement of the London District Service.

There had been complaints at Lyme in 1765 as to the non-delivery of letters and newspapers, the postmaster at Covent Garden was remonstrated with, and, while expressing his regrets to Peter's agent or steward that Mr. Legh should have been so much "disobliged," sends the following explanation :

" . . . But please give yourself time to reflect, as neither you or anyone else gave me notice of Mr Legh's removal from Haydock to Lyme, and not being blessed with the gift of Prophecy, they would have continued in the same channel unless I heard to the contrary. For the future they will be sent to Lyme until Notice is given to Yr most obed<sup>t</sup> Servant

" THO<sup>S</sup> LEWIS."

All letters for London and the intermediate places had to be put in the Stockport post office every night (except Friday) before ten o'clock, the mail coach coming in to Stockport every evening (except Monday) between six and seven.

At its outset the regulation pace was six miles an hour, but in course of time this was increased till the coaches were rated at ten miles an hour. The condition of the roads was mainly responsible for the slow travelling of the day, and it was not until Macadam's \* time that good roads took the place of bad.

It is amusing to read of the first lighting of Stockport town in 1762, when forty-five lamps were considered to be sufficient for this purpose.

Stockport, known in former years as Stokeport, Stoppert and Stopford, has been for generations closely connected with Lyme. The etymology of the name may be Saxon, but there is no evidence of a Saxon settlement, and the place is not mentioned in Domesday. It was in 1220 made a free borough by Robert de Stokeport. A castle was in existence in the twelfth century, but is not mentioned after 1327. Beautifully situated on a steep elevation above the river Mersey, it had no doubt been

\* *McAdam*, John Loudon (1756-1836); the "macadamiser" of roads.

## LYME LETTERS

selected as a fortified outpost for the Roman camp at Manchester, there being a Roman road, known as the "High Street," between the two places.

It must have been most picturesque, much resembling a foreign town, until the manufactories sprang up and hideous chimneys, with their suffocating smoke, tacked on to monstrous buildings, destroyed the natural beauty of the place. Manufactories of hemp began in the sixteenth century and those of silk-covered buttons in the seventeenth, while the famous hat trade developed as early as the end of the eighteenth, and early in the nineteenth century the silk trade was superseded by that of cotton.

The population of Stockport must now be well over 100,000, and must have reached considerable proportions by the end of the eighteenth century. It is therefore rather comical, according to our present ideas of street-lighting, to read in the following letter, written by one Jo. Chetwode of Stockport to Mr. Davenport of Bramhall, of the excitement that the innovation of street-lighting was causing to the good people of the town :

" November 29, 1762.

" . . . You will perhaps think the Town is becoming gay & polite, when I acquaint you that a subscription is making and is near completed for illuminating the Town with 45 lamps."

I will end my quotations from these writers of long ago with the letter from an indignant farmer of Disley, who, complaining of his watercourse being interfered with, writes to Peter Legh's agent in the following terms :

" . . . This is to let you nowe [know] if you think proper to Come Over and Setel [settle] the Matter, Well and Good, or Els Wee Are to try Who must be Master.

" W. ARDERN."

There are Arderns on the Lyme property at the present day who have been there for generations, splendid specimens of the race, staunch, faithful and devoted to the Legh family. Independent, however, and with a sense of their own importance,



## EPILOGUE

they are quite capable of penning a similar letter should occasion arise.

Before closing this, my final chapter, I must place on record the crowning honour Lyme received on December 11, 1913, when our gracious Queen Mary came over from Chatsworth, accompanied by the Duchess of Devonshire and a small party, and honoured us with her presence at luncheon. Her Majesty, the first Queen Consort to cross the threshold of the old house, visited every part of it, and, with her great knowledge and appreciation of works of art, was graciously pleased to express her admiration and approval of all that she saw.

Her visit will always remain a red-letter day in the annals of Lyme, and a cherished and precious memory enshrined in the hearts of its owners.

England—as we knew it—has passed away. Gone are the peace and quiet of long ago. Unrest, perpetual movement, desire for change and excitement have taken the place of the contented spirit, calm serenity and love of home and home-life that were such marked characteristics in our forefathers. Like a giant ant-heap that has been disturbed, its occupants hurrying hither and thither, rushing aimlessly about, and with no seeming object or purpose, the ant-heap of the world, churned up and dislodged from its equilibrium by the Great War, seems incapable of settling down and resuming normal conditions. Discontent prevails, every man's hand seems against his neighbour. Lack of civility, thoughtfulness for others and kindness of spirit seem to have vanished from the nations of the world. There is no time for anything, every man for himself. The lessons and examples of self-sacrifice taught us by that splendid million of our glorious Dead seem all forgotten. Have their sacrifices been in vain? God forbid. A brighter, fairer dawn will surely rise, perhaps for our great-grandchildren, but not for us.

And what of the stately homes of England? How many of these will survive the cruel and ruthless taxation? Why are we not allowed the right to live? Why should it be a crime that we should have succeeded to places too large for present-day requirements? Why, also, should we be prevented from enjoying our

## LYME LETTERS

homes that have come down to us from our forefathers? We only demand the right to live in them, without any of the amenities of former days, but this is to be denied us. What are we to do? We cannot sell, there are no buyers. We cannot let, there is no one to rent the places. We cannot afford to live in our homes, what is to become of them?

Are these glorious examples of the art and culture of the past to fall into ruin and decay, and places that have been the delight and education of the thousands of sightseers who have been privileged to view them, to fall to pieces and disappear? It is a veritable "impasse" and a riddle I am incapable of solving.

The fate of Lyme, like that of many another beautiful and beloved home has hung in the balance. By a sacrifice,\* the extent of which perhaps few can estimate, the place has possibly been saved for a time. Another generation is springing up at Lyme, and three darling little grandsons build castles in the old stone quarries, run races on the slopes and wander through the lovely park and woodland.

Well, when all is gone, and a ruthless Government † has completed the ruin of the class they set out to destroy, we shall still have our self-respect and sweet memories of happy bygone days, and these, thank God, no man can take from us.

\* Making over the place to our eldest son in 1920.

† This was written while the Labour Government was in office.





## LYME LETTERS

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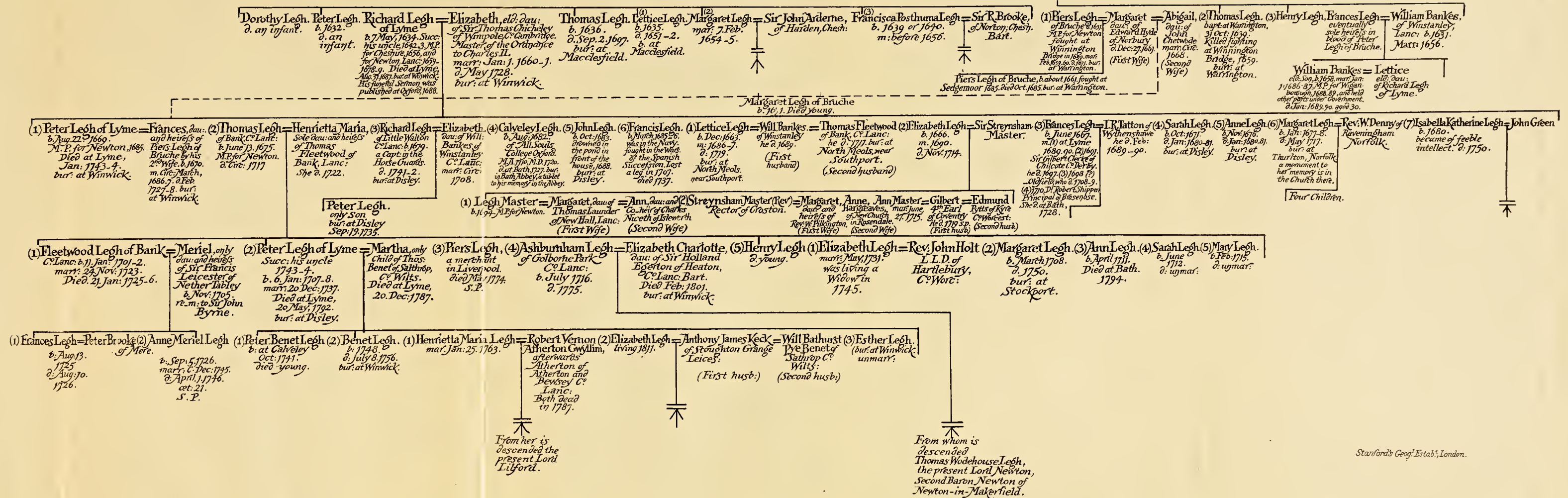
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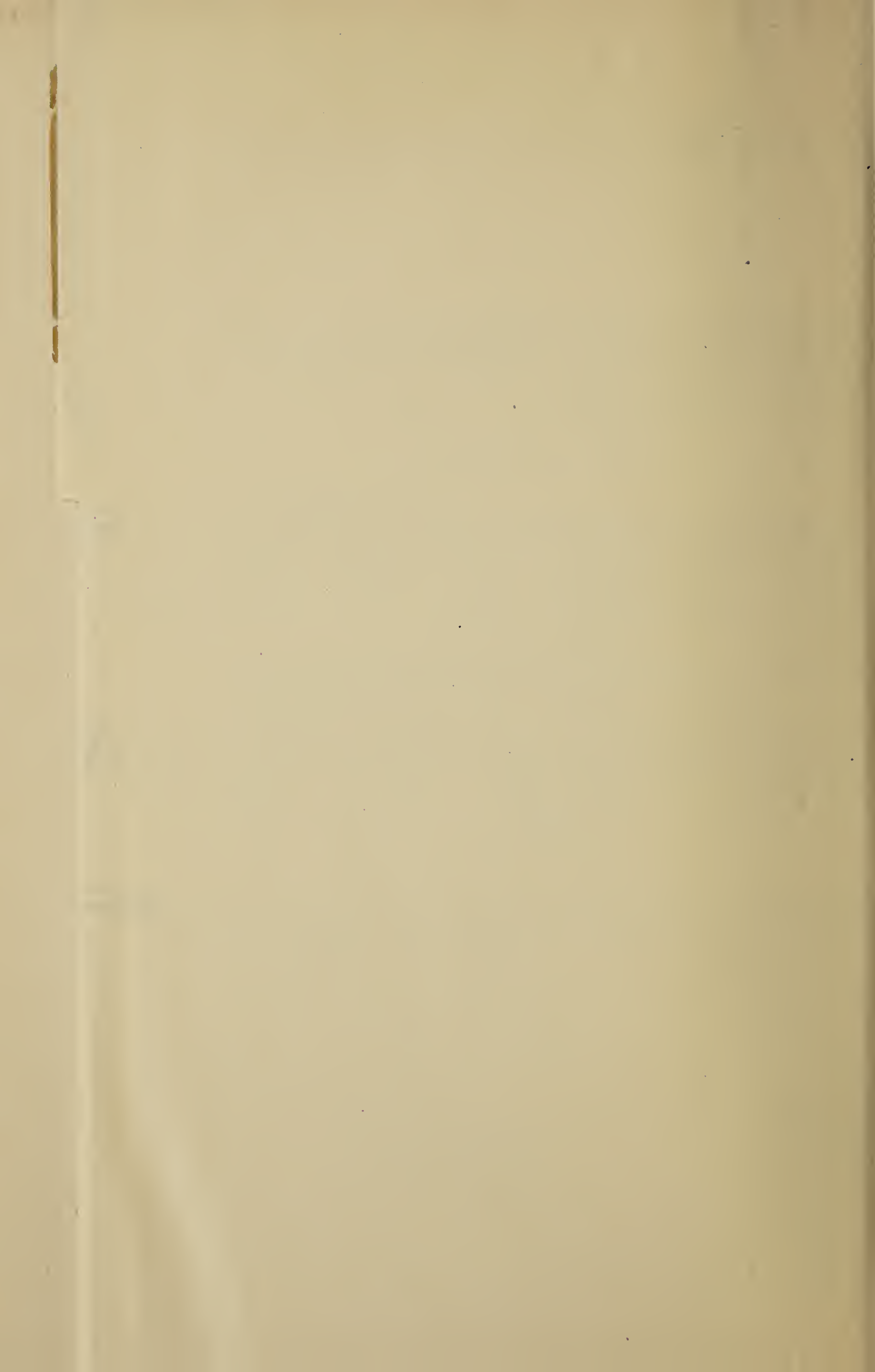
\* Making over the place to our eldest son in 1920.

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# PEDIGREE of RICHARD LEGH of LYME.







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